

# One Long Holiday

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Â Â Â I had a great time living and working overseas and many people have said over the years that I should write a book which I have obviously now done. Obviously at the time my colleagues and I were young and carefree, however some including myself now have families and respectable jobs. For this reason I decided to change the names of everyone in the book as I would hate to be the cause of a divorce or job loss. This is not just a book about being a holiday rep. It is a book about being young, and having the urge to do something different and to say sod it to the world and what is expected of you. I do have a few people to say thank you to. I would like to thank my wife for firstly not divorcing me after reading this book and also reading it in the first place! I can imagine it is not the easiest thing for a wife to read I would also like to thank all of the holiday makers who laughed with me, complained at me, bawled at me and got drunk with me. I would also like to thank Thomson Holidays who gave me the opportunity for 8 years to have the work overseas and enjoy life. Lastly I would like to thank everyone who has worked overseas especially those who I came across and feature in this book. You all, even the ones I did not see eye to eye with made the same decision I did and left all of your home comforts for a bit of excitement and like me, I bet you had the time of your life. Â **Chapter 1: I really need to get away** **Chapter 2: Changing my life forever** **Chapter 3 The Interview** **Chapter 4: The Training Course** **Chapter 5: Arriving in Resort** **Chapter 6: The Transfer** **Chapter 7: Welcome to €!..** **Chapter 8: Let the Holiday Begin** **Chapter 9: Corfu** **Chapter 10: Visits** **Chapter 11: Trips and Apres Ski** **Chapter 12: The Girls** **Chapter 13: The Guests** **Chapter 14: The Reps** **Chapter 15: Andorra** **Chapter 16: Livigno** **Chapter 17: I am a Ski Ranger** **Chapter 18: The End of the Season** **Chapter 19: Gap Year** **Chapter 20: Second Coming** **Chapter 21: France** **Chapter 22: Being a Boyfriend in Italy** **Chapter 23: From Kavos to Lake Garda** **Chapter 24: Going Up the Ladder** **Chapter 25: Friends and Family Visits** **Chapter 26: I am the Boss** **Chapter 27: The End is Nigh** **Chapter 28: No more Free Drinks** Â Â One Long Holiday Â **Chapter 1 I really need to get away** Â Have you ever had that feeling where you just need to do something exciting? Have you ever had that feeling when you are so bored with your life you need to tell everyone to piss off? Have you ever had that feeling where you feel your life is going to be boring and that you will just live in the same town forever? I had all of those feeling many times and I am sure most of you have had as well. There was a time, many years ago when I wasn't happy. I was bored shitless, I was in a rut and I needed an adventure to change my life. I just wanted to get away from it all and taste some excitement. So I stopped pissing about and did something about it. My life now is completely different from what it was back then and probably for my health that is a good thing. However I do think that I would not be as happy as I am today if I had not done something about it. I partied more than most people, I travelled more than most people, I drank more than most people but more importantly, I laughed more than most people. I was a holiday rep. I lived by the beach in the summer and in the mountains in the winter working in holiday resorts. My life was fantastic. I worked hard and partied even harder. It felt like I was on one long holiday and when I wasn't working in a holiday resort, guess what? I went on holiday. Some people love holiday reps and some people hate them, but I can honestly say it was the best thing I ever did. I don't necessarily want to go back to it although I do reminisce. Even though I worked in some resorts that were more British than places

in Britain, I did sample different cultures and I did explore different places. Even when I was living and working in the party resort of Kavos, I went and explored the rest of Corfu and sampled Greek culture and their food. I can say that it was the best time of my life and I felt like a celebrity, because there were times when I felt like and was treated like a king. Admittedly a king who had to work my balls off for very little money from the company, but a king all the same. When I was a holiday rep we used to get asked all the time by the punters how they could get a job as a rep as they thought I was on "One Long Holiday". I had probably asked a rep the same question myself.

People obviously only saw the going out side of things and the fun side but there was a lot of shit to deal with as well. People also used to ask me what it was like. So to give you an idea I have decided to write this book. However it isn't just a book chronicling repping. It is a book about being young and carefree, about educating and discovering yourself and the big wide world. I am not saying everyone should be a holiday rep, but I do say that everyone at some time in their life should say "FUCK IT" to what is expected from them and do something for themselves even if it is after you have raised a family. I am sure at certain times in the book some people will think I am a bit of an idiot. At times I was. However it is important to tell it how it was then. I was young though and through enjoying myself in my youth I feel that I have become a better person and this is due to living my life to the full. I have seen so many people not live their life to the full and go from school/college to career to marriage to family and a lot of the time divorce. I have had a lot of people tell me that they wish they had travelled before they started a family. The only thing that is stopping you doing this is you. I had two opportunities in my younger days to go and work abroad. I did not take the first opportunity up. I was too scared and suffered from procrastination. The second opportunity I got, I was gone. I am a happier contented person for doing it and hopefully from reading this book you will be able to tell that I had the best time doing it. Enjoy. **Â Â**

**Chapter 2 Changing my life forever** Like many people, growing up I always wanted to travel the world and see many different places. The only problem was I used to spend money quicker than I got it and ended up going on a few lads' holidays and skiing. So those five roads including the runway that I would see in Faliraki or Tenerife and all the piste's I had skied on was the extent of my seeing the world, and it wasn't looking like I was going to see many more places. I worked in the motor industry; I lived in a midlands town and lived for Friday and Saturday nights. The only problem was my mates were settling down with girls, getting good careers etc. and not wanting to go out every night. I was bored with life but I did not know what I wanted to do, but needed to do something. I was in a relationship with a girl called Debbie, who was lovely, although I was not lovely to her. In fact I was a git to her. I always was a good talker and did find it easy to chat to women and did so on a Friday and Saturday night and would not think twice about copping off with somebody behind her back. A lot of people would ask when we were going to move in together or get married, but I knew that would never happen as I had not lived my life yet. I was yearning for something exciting to happen, and realised it needed to be me who made the decision and quickly as I would just get sucked into the vortex of a boring life without ever doing anything exciting. I was not sure how long I could hold off the moving in together question. I am not sure if you have ever felt the need to shout out loud, or just party till you drop or just simply get away from it all. That is how I felt. I felt great when I was partying at the weekend or on a lad's trip away. I also felt great when I was out on my bike or had my head in a book. As long as I was away from the real world I was happy. The trouble was that was not often enough. I felt trapped and had a desire to get away and do something different. I am a product of the 70's and 80's which was a strange time to have grown up. My education was shit and unmonitored by my parents so basically at school I did nothing. I wasn't one of the bad kids; I sometimes got into trouble but nothing major. Although my parents got divorced when I was seven, I did not have too bad an upbringing. Both parents remarried and my life was OK and I did not want for anything. I was into every sport going and that kept me away from a lot of potential trouble and also things like alcohol, smoking, drugs and girls. Then at eighteen my Mum and step dad got divorced which meant a move to a smaller house. My mum did not have much money so instead of getting educated to a standard that I should have I started working and had a few jobs which were ok but nothing exciting. I discovered beer and girls so basically my life at the time was working, getting

pissed at the weekend and trying not to settle down. I enjoyed going out and partying and loved the camaraderie of a big group of friends, and when I first started going out it felt like it was going to last forever. Then one friend makes the dreaded announcement that they are getting engaged. It is a bit of a shock, but you think, "Oh well, one down." Then more of your friends are doing it or moving in with each other, and you are thinking, "Shit is this what I have to do, is this normal?" There was always something in me that wanted to travel and see the world. My older sister buggered off to Thailand with hardly a pound in her pocket and I was very envious of her. I wanted to see places but did not have the money to do it and that was not likely to change as I could not save a penny. I was in a rut and I did not know how I was going to get out of it. I was not confident enough to go away without any money or a plan. I always remember seeing the advert in "The Mirror" newspaper while sitting in the car having some lunch. It was for Thomson holidays and they wanted confident people. I thought I'm confident. It wanted outgoing people, yep ticked that one. The ability to present I thought yep I can do that as well. Organised? Well sort of. It mentioned about living and working in the sun and you get a wage, fed and a place to live. This sounded too good to be true. I tried to remember whether I had witnessed any holiday reps and what they did. My first memories were of being fleeced as an 18 year old and spending most of our spending money on trips that we did not want to go on. I thought I can definitely fleece people if needed. I remember the reps leading bar crawls. I knew I could do that part well. I remember the cabarets and thought, yep that would be fun. I also remember the ski reps and thought that would be fantastic. I also remember the amount of girls the reps copped off with and thought I could definitely do that. So I rang up and got an application form sent, filled it out and sent it off without telling anybody in the world. It was March 15th 1995. That trip to the post box was the start of eight years of travelling and having the time of my life. It was a small step, but finally I had done something. "Who knows where it will lead?" I thought at the time and, "Why did I not think of being a holiday rep before?" **Chapter 3 The Interview** It all happened quite quickly after that. A letter inviting me for interview arrived a week later and I went down for the interview on 31st March. I still hadn't told a soul about the interview. You may think it was because I did not want to get people building up hopes etc. but it was purely because I did not want Debbie finding out. If I did not get the job, then there was no harm done. I had to research the holiday company a bit, and look at their destinations and I would also have to do a brochure and airport code test. The main thing we had to prepare for was a presentation based on the sale of an excursion. Presenting was something I was confident with and I tried to include a bit of humour. They also said that they would look at our foreign language skills. Now this was a weakness of mine as the only language I had any knowledge of was a bit of schoolboy French, and I have already said how shit my education was. In my French Aural exam I muttered the words "Voulez Vouz Repeter" many times! I also remembered the Greek word Malaka (Wanker) which if I thought the interview was a bit lively I could say. I did know somebody who was a club 18-30 rep and I remember him telling me that his interview was wild. However it was a Thomson interview and they were a bit mainstream. So I made my way to the train station on the Friday morning and I nearly did not go. You have to realise this was 1995 and there was no internet to check prices. I got to the cashier at the train station and it was a bloke who I knew serving, and he also knew Debbie. I had told Debbie I was going on a training day in London and had to leave on the 6.30 train. So I asked for a day return and he printed off the ticket and said "£47" I nearly had a heart attack and thought should I bother. However due to my deception to Debbie and that this bloke would tell her that I asked for some tickets and then did not go due to the price, meant I had to pay the money and go to London. That deception proved to be a major point in me becoming a holiday rep. Who said lying never helps? So I settled down on my way to London and Thomson's head office which was at a place called Greater London House. There were about 12 people being interviewed by two rather attractive ladies who were supervisors/ area managers. I could tell straight away that they were confident but a bit reserved and not necessarily looking for larey people. So I decided to play confident, but not too mouthy. There was one guy there who basically talked about getting pissed and that he wants a lively resort. You could just tell he wasn't going to get the job and he was asked to leave at lunchtime. There was an attractive girl there who just seemed perfect in the first

part of the day and seemed desperate for the job. Fluent in Spanish, keen, attractive and then she did her presentation. It was awful and all she did was mumble and at the end burst out crying. I gave her a nice touch on the shoulder as comfort but knew I would never see her again. One guy was asked if he had any language skills. He replied "When I was in Greece I learnt the word Malaka" You could have cut the atmosphere with a knife. I was so glad I had not been asked the question first. It was then down to my presentation, which I based on the sale of a boat barbecue as I had been on one. I can honestly say it was a good presentation and one of the best on the day, but I did not have a clue how many jobs there were and how many were being interviewed. I could tell the interviewers liked my presentation in the one to one I had and thought I had a chance. At the end though, they said if successful we would be invited back to London for a second interview. Great another £47. I said goodbye to the rest of the people who were being interviewed who were mostly a nice bunch, and we all said we hoped we would see each other again. I never saw any of them again. At that time I was excited that it could be happening, but also worried that I could get rejected. I had only just got off my arse to apply for this job so I had no plan B. I really wanted the job and waited anxiously for the post every day. It was a few days later where I saw that I got a letter from Thomson Holidays. I still hadn't told anybody that I had gone for the job. I opened the letter hoping to be invited for the 2nd interview. It was not an invite to a second interview. It was an offer of a job as a holiday rep on the island of Corfu. "Fuckin hell" were the words out of my mouth - I could not believe it and had to have a seat. They wanted me to go on a 5 day training course starting Monday 24th April and then fly out to Corfu on May 2nd. That was less than a month away. It was morning when I opened the letter and I needed to speak to someone, as I was in total shock. Could it be that I was going to leave sunny England for 6 months to spend a summer on a Greek island? The pay looked pretty shit, but I knew that there were opportunities to make money in a variety of ways. You also got food and lodgings which would save a fortune as well. Most of my mates were at work as it was during the day, and I was just going around a few garages that day so thought I could do that later and went to see my mate Andy. Andy had been made redundant and got quite a good pay-out. Instead of investing it going travelling etc. he decided to have a year off and did not a lot apart from going to the pub. Due to the nature of my job I ended up going round to his place and the pub with him quite a lot. It was about 9.30 in the morning and he opened the door in in his dressing gown. "Fuck me you're early! Have you finished work already?" was his greeting. "I have something to tell you and need to speak to somebody" I replied. Andy looked at me "You haven't got an STD have you? Because if you have, knowing our lot and all the swapping we do, we will all have it" "No, course not, but I do think it could be possible that I will be doing a lot of shagging in the next 6 months" and showed him the letter. Andy read my job offer letter and just burst out laughing as did I. "What are you going to do?" he asked. "I have been offered it, I have to go. It's too good an opportunity" I said. After a while something dawned on him. "Hang on a minute, what about Debbie?" I jokingly said that she had not been offered a job but realised that she would be really upset and I wasn't looking forward to telling her. I arranged to meet Andy at the pub later and went off to work. I decided that I would not tell Debbie at the moment but obviously the time was ticking away and soon I would be on the course and more importantly on that plane. I did have to tell my mother which was also upsetting. My sister was already living in Thailand and this would mean that she would be on her own. However, her social life at the time was excellent and she was out most nights anyway. She was upset, but I did tell her I needed to do something like this or I would regret it. I think if the opportunity had been around when she was my age then she would have loved to have done it. I then called my Dad and told him as well. He was quite excited for me and said it would be a good opportunity which I knew it was. My Mum and Dad split up when I was seven and Dad had remarried June. While it was difficult at the time for my mum, there was no bitterness from me and I got on with my Dad and June very well. They had had two boys Anthony and Stuart who were very young: 7 and 3 at the time of my going abroad. I rang my best mate Jimbo up who had just proposed to his girlfriend Maxine and was due to get married in August '96. Jimbo seemed a bit upset that I was doing something that years before he had wanted to and I had said no to. I wasn't going to make the same mistake twice. I was due to be his best man the following year, and he said "You will be

back?" I said, "Yeah, I will probably only do it for 6 months" I met up with Andy and loads of the other lads at the pub that night, He asked whether I had told Debbie, which of course I hadn't and said I had better not tell anybody else until I had. The problem was I was on such a high and was grinning like a Cheshire cat that I blurted it out to a lot of my mates that were out that night. So now quite a few people knew all except Debbie. The next morning I did something that felt great and that was pack in my job. It wasn't a bad job, well paid and a company car at 23. It just wasn't what I wanted to do. I felt such a relief doing it and such freedom. Due to holidays accrued I only had two weeks of work left, which was all very exciting. I spent the night at Debbie's and still did not have the balls to tell her, and was feeling very nervous around her. On the Friday I went out with the lads and all the ones who were not out the other night already knew my plans through the grapevine. Like an idiot with a few beers inside him I ended up telling loads of other people as well. I saw Debbie on the Saturday night and still did not tell her. So basically my family knew, my job knew, all my mates knew and probably their girlfriends and family. I had also told anyone who was listening on Friday night my future plans. The only person I had not told was Debbie. Thank God Facebook was not around then. I decided during Sunday lunch that I needed to tell her. I was at Andy and Ali's house who were both there with their girlfriends. They were all taking the piss. In the end I got in my car and said "I am going to do it" Andy jokingly said "See you in half an hour" He was not too far from the truth. I got to Debbie's and I was shitting it. She could tell there was something wrong with me. "Debbie, there is something I have to say and you are not going to like it" I said. Not the best line if I am honest. "I have got a new job" She looked a bit confused as though she was expecting something else. "A job with who?" "I have got a job as a rep with Thomson" Now I thought she would realise I meant the holiday company. "What the telephone directory people. What would you want a job with them for?" "No the holiday company as a holiday rep" There I had done it. She knew. That was when she went absolutely nuts and started going mad at me. Not hard or anything but she was crying and told me to get out her house. I did not need telling twice, and it was best she had some time to herself! I went straight back to Andy's and Ali's. It was not much longer than the half hour Andy had predicted. I gave Debbie a call later and we met up and had a chat. I was honest with her and said that it was something I needed to do and felt stifled in this country and needed to see a bit of the world. I said it would probably only be for 6 months, but you never know. I said I wasn't looking to split up but would understand if she wanted to end it. We agreed to see how it went. So we saw each other for the next couple of weeks including my 24th birthday where I had a bit of an emotional send off from my mum. It was difficult as I was very excited about my new job, but could not express any of that to her. I just wanted to shout and scream, but she just wanted to cry. During my first summer Debbie did come out a couple of times. The first time was excellent, and we had a great time. The second not so good. She found a letter (Yes letter, it was before emails) from my mate Andy. We had exchanged a few over the summer and I had talked about a Dutch rep called Anita who I had met and copped off with. In Andy's reply he had mentioned Anita and asked about her riding for Holland or something similar. Debbie read this, and that was the end of us as a couple. It was a relief for me and I also think Debbie as well. We got on well for the next couple of days until she went home. Debbie left on the plane back to Birmingham and I only saw her once in the next 8 years and then not again since. She had married not long after leaving Corfu and I think had four kids. Phew, lucky escape. After Debbie left, I vowed not to have a girlfriend for a long time. I was not in the right job for one and despite me being a bit of a git I did not like being horrible to people, especially ones that I liked. So that was it then after a whirlwind few weeks my life had changed completely. I had finally done something and got off my own arse and took control of my life and destiny. In seven weeks I had made some of the best decisions I had ever made. I had a job which on paper looked fun and fantastic and was going to let me see the world. I didn't just do one summer, I ended up doing 8. I also did 8 ski seasons as well which was fantastic fun as well. I worked in Corfu, The Algarve, Lake Garda, Andorra, The French Alps and the Italian Alps and had the time of my life. Now you may think a lot of us literally just turn up at the airport and become your holiday rep. However, before I went to a lot of these places, I had to do something which does not sound very interesting. However believe me they always ended up a lot of fun and plenty

always happened. In fact they were not just fun, they were often pure carnage. I am talking about The Training Course. **Chapter 4 The Training Course** I made my way down to my first reps training course on Monday 24th April 1995 and it was 4 nights with 5 days of course work and learning the ins and outs of being a holiday rep. As I mentioned I ended up working many seasons and training courses did differ quite a lot. Some were in the UK. Often when you got to resort they would have a few days training just to introduce you to everybody and their systems. There were also ski training courses which involved courses for ski repping and ski rangers which incorporated 4 days skiing on the mountain with a couple of days theory, more of which later. I was now on the journey to living abroad even though it was another 8 days till I got on the plane. During the journey down on the train I was trying to work out if anyone was going to be a holiday rep as well. We then had to walk a mile or so from Euston to GLH (Thomson head office), where we would meet a coach to take us to this hotel near Stansted airport. When I arrived at GLH, I could not believe what I saw. There must have been about three hundred young people all waiting to get on one of the many coaches that would take us to the course. I could not believe how many were women. It must have been an 8/1 ratio; this was going to be fantastic. I look back now and it looked a bit like when you see the X factor auditions in the early stages and they are lining up on the street outside. It was also full of lots of people trying to make a name for themselves and a few freaks of nature as well. Now it might surprise you that when faced with situations where there are lots of people all in a new situation, I do hold back a little. I am not shy but I like to assess the situation and make sure I don't end up with a complete idiot for the next few days. The only problem is sometimes you can't help the odd idiot latching on to you! It was a chap called Nigel who introduced himself to me and I could tell by his boater hat and guitar that he was an idiot. A guitar on a training course. What a knob. It wasn't as if were flying straight out to resort. Then the next bombshell. He was going to Corfu and he was on the same flight as me leaving Birmingham the following Tuesday. Great! All the way on the bus he was telling everyone who would listen about his season in Ibiza. On the way there I managed to get chatting to a few other people including two Pauls who were going to Corfu as well. One a cockney and one a scouser who both seemed like good blokes. I also got chatting to this beautiful girl called Lauren who was absolutely stunning. We had a laugh and she was like me but leaving the "mundane town of Telford" instead of Nuneaton. She was spending the summer in Menorca. She said she would prefer a livelier resort but would go for that next year. Bloody hell I hadn't even thought of next year. When we arrived, at the hotel for the training course we were in for a bit of a shock. They had obviously just watched Full Metal Jacket or some other army recruit film as they were trying to behave like Sgt Majors and weed out the weak. There was not a smile from any of the supervisors, who had seemed to have personality bypasses. The funny thing is one of them was shouting at everybody to hurry up and Nigel with the guitar said "Hey lovely! You need to relax, meet me in the bar later!" The look of horror on the supervisors face was a picture. She gave him such a verbal dressing down that he soon wished he had not said anything. We then got split into groups of certain areas and the reps for Corfu and Rhodes were put together, so I was not with the lovely Lauren. The good thing this did was show me who I would be working with in the summer, and certainly from the new reps on this course there were 19 in total 13 girls, 6 blokes of which 2 were gay that were going to Rhodes or Corfu. Not a bad ratio I thought. Luckily they had set our places and I was well away from Nigel the Knob. They then gave us an outline of the course and they would be telling us everything about the job but this would be backed up by training in resort. They told us that we would be doing role plays of welcome meetings, complaints, excursion guiding and transfers, with night time activities as well. We were expected to go to every session and if we did not we would fail the course and go home. If we were late in the morning we would fail the course and go home. And then they said if they had any reason why they thought we would make a bad rep we would fail the course and go home. Well they certainly had told us straight and I was determined to make the most of this opportunity so I only made myself obvious when needed. I did not want to fail the course and go home. At a coffee break everyone was listening to a girl called Paula. Paula had worked for the company for about a year but as a Kiddy rep (Children reps run the In Resort Kids Clubs. A job I definitely could not do). She was telling us that for some reason there had been a lot of reps

leaving and it had left Thomson short for the summer, so they had a massive recruitment drive and this was the reason why we did not have the second interview. So the reason I got the job was because they were desperate! Oh well, there was nothing I could do about that now. So the 5 days of theory work was quite tiring and they were really cramming it into us. We had to do presentations, role plays etc. and I got on ok with that. There were a few people who did not finish the course due to their choice or in most cases the supervisors. We were encouraged to have a few drinks at night. I think they wanted to see who can handle it and burn the candle at both ends. I ended up knocking about with a few reps that were going to the Balearics and had a good laugh with them. I also got on well with Lauren and was very attracted to her and I think the feeling was mutual. There was a bit of shagging going on, which I was not against, and the last thing I wanted to do was get off with somebody who was going to Corfu. I was really getting into Lauren and as soon as I finished a session I would go and look for her. I am not sure what it was but she had this attraction and confidence about her but not in a horrible way. She liked a laugh and on the Wednesday we ended up in her room and had a bit of a kiss on her bed. I was thinking yes I am in here, until I heard the key of the door go and it was her roommate. I am sure it has happened to everybody but I was pissed off at this interruption. We ended up going to the bar. The next night was the last night and the night ended up being a bit lively with lots of copping off going on. Lauren had told me some great news. Her roommate was into a guy who had managed to wangle his own room. Yes this could be it. We had a lot to drink that night as did everybody else. It's amazing how so many young people can get on after only knowing each other for a few days. Some were getting on very well and all the time we were being watched by the supervisors. I ended up in Lauren's room and we did end up in bed. This was my first sexual encounter as a holiday rep and I had not even left the country yet! This was going to be one great job. I was lying next to Lauren. We were both on the bed naked when I got a bit of a shock. The door burst open and about 20 reps very drunk burst in to the room including the girl Lauren was sharing a room with. The noise was unbelievable and knowing that the Supervisors were a bit sack happy at the moment I said to Lauren to make a move and get out of the room. We got out the bed naked much to the delight of the other reps grabbed our clothes and got out the room. As we were walking along the corridor naked I saw one of the supervisors and luckily managed to tuck into a doorway. They did not see us. We quickly got dressed and made our way to my room. It was after this that I started talking like an idiot. Despite only knowing Lauren for a few days I really liked Lauren and told her. I said "I really wish I was going to Menorca or you were coming to Corfu" Now I am not sure if I was just in auto pilot mode and saying what I thought she would want to hear, but I was shocked by her reply "I'm not". She said "If I wanted a relationship I would be staying at home and getting married. I am doing this to have some fun and meet some people and sample a bit of culture. No offence I like you, but I don't want a relationship with you" I burst out laughing. I had never had a girl say anything like that to me before and she was bang on. I wasn't doing this job to have a relationship either. I wanted to get out of the country as well and see some things that I had never seen before. It also made me realise that a lot of women don't necessarily want a relationship especially the ones becoming reps. I will be honest, up until this time I did not have many female friends that I had not tried it on with. It was definitely an eye opener and changed my attitude - that a lot of girls just want a bit of fun as well. We got over my embarrassing comments and as my roommate never came back Lauren stayed the night. Before the course finished we were dished out loads of uniform. This was not a moment of pride. Thomson, like many holiday companies had an awful uniform with bright blue trousers and even worse a Canary yellow jacket. I tried it on and it was awful. Any ideas that I would be a cool holiday rep were quickly dispelled. Would I really have to wear this? I looked like an absolute clown. I pledged to myself that I would do whatever I could not to wear this uniform. So the course finished and I made my way back up to Nuneaton for my final weekend in the UK for six months. I said goodbye to Lauren at Euston and I never saw her again. I heard that she did a summer in Menorca and one of the Canary Islands for the winter, but lost track after that. I did a number of courses after the new reps course, most of which were overseas and without the fear of being sent home. There was one which was in the UK and that was 6 months later after I had been told that I had got a placement in Andorra for the ski

resort. New Reps were not meant to get ski resorts after just one summer, but somehow I managed to get one, probably due to my skiing past! Anyway I went on the course after being home for a few weeks, and during that time my sister had come back from living in Thailand for the last few years. She was heavily pregnant and found out that her unborn child was very poorly. The doctors said that the baby was unlikely to survive for long. I had been to see my sister after Lilly was born at Birmingham's children's hospital and it was not looking good for Lilly. I went on the ski reps course waiting for news from home and while on the course Lilly died. The funeral was on the day I was due to fly out from Andorra. I asked the manager from Thomson who was taking the course if they could fly me out a day later so I could attend the funeral. He refused and said I would lose my placement meaning I would end up going through the whole winter without work. I could not believe it. They said they need me in Andorra for the start of the season. Nowadays and with a bit more confidence I would have demanded to go and keep my job but I was a young inexperienced kid not wanting 6 months on the dole. I tried to justify not going to the funeral by the fact I had only met Lilly once at the hospital and also I had not seen my sister for 4 years. I called my mum and sister to say I would not be coming to the funeral. It was a hard decision and now I realise it was a wrong one and one I regret, I should however have been supported by my employers. What made the decision worse was that when I spoke with the Andorra managers they would have allowed me to come out a day late, and one new rep came out a few days later after another rep had dropped out of coming to Andorra. I saw the Thomson manager who had refused permission, a couple of years later and I was pissed up and told him what a wanker he was that he did not even check with the local office whether I could go out a day late. He was in front of a few people and denied it, but I refused to speak to him whenever I saw him which luckily was not very often. Many years later I ran a half marathon in aid of Birmingham Children's Hospital where Lilly had passed away. It was a way of saying sorry. I did a couple of seasons as a Ski Guide for Thomson. So they did not upset the local ski schools Thomson called this role "Ski Ranger". I can honestly say that these courses were the best and the most lively. I did 3 in the end in Les Deux Apes, France, Mayrhofen, Austria and Passo Tonale in Italy. Due to the amount of alcohol consumed these courses in my memory do merge into each other. At the time there was no Ryanair or Easyjet, so before the season started to get to these places it was often by coach to the Alps. Which is usually at least 24 hours on a coach. On one occasion we were all due to meet at Victoria Coach Station in London. A lot of us got there 30 minutes to an hour early, and it was great to see some people who we had not seen for 6 months, a year or even 3 years. So what do a bunch of young reps do when they have an hour to spare? Yes go to the pub of course. It was a great atmosphere. We were all exchanging stories from the previous season and talking about memories from previous courses and the drinks were flowing. After about an hour and a half we were starting to get a bit worried because no coach had shown up. After two hours somebody from Thomson Head office came and said that there had been a problem with the bus and it was going to be another 3 hours before it was here to take us to Italy. Then she made the biggest mistake and announced that she was going to put a few hundred pounds behind the bar so we could get some food and substance. She then left. This was great news, and we continued to get absolutely hammered. I am not sure this little bar/cafe had ever seen an afternoon like it. One of the lads was a Thomson entertainer so he started singing and gained the nickname "Boyband". There were card schools going on and relationships were starting to be formed despite the fact that had we not yet left Victoria station. Eventually the coach arrived 5 hours late and the Italian driver was disgusted to find a bus load of pissed up idiots. We weren't just merry; we were hammered and some people had to be guided on to the bus. The Italian driver then told us that we had a lot of time to make up to get the tunnel, and like a lot of coach drivers who want to keep their coach clean, that the toilets were broken. Now bearing in mind we had been drinking for 5 hours, our bladders were not in the best working order. Also we had an 800 mile journey of about 20 hours without a toilet. After the 2nd mile of those 800 and us all looking at each other, a guy called Jonny cracked: "I need a piss" he said. Somebody else said "So do I but we can't stop after two miles the driver will do his nut." After a long half mile Jonny said "Fuck it!" and went up to the driver and told him he needed to stop for a piss. The driver was not happy and started to swear in

Italian. He relented and stopped at a petrol station, thinking only Jonny would be getting off the bus. He was a bit shocked that everybody was getting off, even the girls. The Petrol station did not have a toilet so we were then wandering around on a busy London road trying to find somewhere discreet to go to the toilet. Even the girls were not bothered and most of them had their trousers round their ankles, as the relief overcame any embarrassment. We must have looked a strange sight in rush hour London thirty odd people desperate to go to the toilet. Due to the alcohol we had smuggled on board, we ended up needing another couple of stops before we even made the tunnel and then one more as we got through Calais. It was at this point that the driver "fixed" the toilet. The way it was going we would have taken longer than Hannibal and his elephants to get over the Alps. On the journey there was lots of alcohol being drunk and a bit of card playing. I remember a chap called Lee and a Welsh girl called Dionne getting very intimate on the back seat of the coach. Lee had a big smile on his face for the whole course. Morning appeared, and we pulled into a services somewhere in Switzerland. Now Europe is a lot more liberated than the UK about certain things. Not only did it allow us to replenish our stock of beer, it also had a sex movie theatre. Now I had never been to a sex movie theatre before, and definitely not one at a motorway services. I can't imagine one at Watford Gap or Corley. So a group of us decided to go in and take a look, bearing in mind it was about 8 in the morning. It was full of big hairy arsed truckers enjoying the movie - literally! The movie was full on, although I don't recall the story line. I decided that as I was not sure where I was going to be living in the next few weeks and I did not know when I would be able to get to a launderette, I did not want to dirty my clothes by sitting in something I shouldn't and decided to leave the truckers to their film. It took a few more hours to get to Passo Tonale from the services, and I decided to stop the drinking. Even though I was not worried about getting the sack anymore, the management decided which resort you were going to spend the next four months in and I did not want a shit one. I also knew that whatever time we got to Passo Tonale, there would be work straight away. We got there mid-afternoon and were greeted by a lot of the big wigs from Thomson Ski, and they did not look happy. We got off the bus and we were all hanging. It had been a near 24 hour session and we must have looked awful and stunk to high heaven. We didn't really get a bollocking. Ski rangers courses always had a reputation of being lively it was just this one started before we even got on the bus. 5 days later all the reps, children reps and club hotel staff came and needless to say the coach was on time and no alcohol was allowed on the bus. With the ski courses it always ended up that the resort was just full of very excited people, a lot of whom it was their first view of the mountains, and I suppose it was just like a fresher's week for a new student. Some of the new staff were very young, and while you needed to be at least 21 to be a rep or a ski ranger you only need to be 18 to be a kiddie rep, chalet host or hotel worker. The mountain air also seemed to have an effect on alcohol tolerance and people seemed to get drunk a lot quicker. On the ski ranger courses four of the six days were spent skiing on the mountain. This was absolutely bliss as the slopes were empty and it was just great to get in the mountains and on the slopes. Its times like these that you realise what a lucky sod you are. Free skiing, for four months. The mountains are like nothing else and if you have never skied before or spent any time in the mountains you should go as it is true beauty. There are hardly any cars, sometimes you can be on a slope and not hear a sound. To be a Ski ranger one thing that is needed is to be able to ski. We don't teach people when we are doing the sessions, but obviously you need to be able to get down anything. On every ski Ranger course I did there would always be one or two where there had been a mix up or they had lied about their ability and experience. For those of us experienced we used to lay wagers on who that person would be. You could usually work it out at the ski hire shop or on your way to the first lift. It would happen at the bottom of the first drag lift or the top of the first chair and that person would go arse over tit wiping a few people out. It was always a funny sight unless you were the person being wiped out. I knew one guy who did it. A chap called Luke who also did a season in Corfu. He was a Burnley lad, lovely but dim sometimes. On his winter work application form he said he put that he had skied since he was 5 years old, was an expert and got qualifications in French. It turned out he skied when he was five years old and once when he was 14 and had a GCSE in French. He was awful and basically could not turn or stop came off the chair lift, taking out two other Ski Rangers in the process. He lasted

an hour before he was told he was not going to be a Ski Ranger. It wasn't all bad though as he was given a ski reps role in one of the resorts. If he had just applied to be a ski rep he probably would not have got it and ended up doing young at heart in Spain. "Young at heart" was a programme in the winter resorts of Spain like Benidorm and Torremolinos for the over sixties. As a rep you had to go on things like bingo nights, tea dances and mystery tours. It sounded like my worst nightmare and although some people apparently liked it, I felt lucky that I never had to do it. With the Ski Ranger courses much of it was practical and on the slopes. Most of the people who ran the course were ex Ski Rangers themselves and up for a laugh despite their foray into management. All except one, a guy called Dave Aitken who was another who seemed to go down the sergeant major route. Everything had to be spick and span appearance wise, especially uniform and he would pick on every undone button. He would not let you point at something with a pole saying it was dangerous and wanted you to be very descriptive on the views. The great thing about these courses was the role plays as it gave you opportunities to completely wind up the person who had been designated "Ski Ranger" We would work out a strategy to test them and their skills of observation and guiding. The role of being a Ski Ranger was to take a group of up to 12 people skiing for the day in a safe way, giving them some great skiing without them having to think and look at a map. In general when you had a group of punters most of them do not know each other and are usually of different ski ability. So keeping them together and safe and making it enjoyable could be a challenge. On the courses we were given free rein to test the ranger. So we would fall over on purpose, totally disappear from the rangers view and generally make it like the guiding session from hell. There was one role play where the ranger was skiing and he could feel the skis of the guy behind him so carried on. We all noticed that he was not looking up the mountain so decided to go down a different piste. He ended up going a couple of kilometres down the mountain, so we decided to find a little mountain hut for a hot toddy or two. It took him an hour to find us, where he absolutely lost his rag. He vowed revenge on all of us when it was our turn to be the ranger. We also had to go through a first aid training course on a mountain, which was pretty intense on the mountain. They showed a very graphic video and slide show of some ski and boarding injuries which were horrific. I was paired up with a lovely Welsh girl called Dionne once. Dionne was a brilliant girl and an excellent skier and a bit dizzy but well up for a laugh. They had been teaching us about clearing the airways and making sure that the injured person was safe. Obviously as it's a role play you know the injured person is going to go down. The only thing is you don't know when. We were skiing over a brow of a hill and a particular steep section and I had picked up a bit too much speed and knew this was a mistake. I stopped and waited for Dionne and after 30 seconds knew that she had decided to be injured "Bitch" I cursed. I got my skis off and then proceeded to get myself up the mountain not knowing how far I would have to walk up. It took a while as the slope was extremely steep and finally arrived at her slumped body lying motionless on the slope apart from the movement of her giggling body. I was pouring with sweat after my hike and then had to check for the vital signs. She said to me with her eyes still and closed. "I'd be bloody dead by now, boyo" I checked if I was being monitored and covered her face with snow and shouted "die" and then collapsed on the snow myself, both of us laughing our heads off at the fact she had managed to get me good and proper. At lunch Dionne told everyone about my hike up the mountain. Revenge was on my mind and I had a plan. I managed to sneak an extra bread roll and some ketchup into my pocket. Dionne knew revenge was coming but I let her wait. Back on the slopes, I put the whole bread roll into my mouth with the ketchup and chewed without swallowing to form a gooey mess in my mouth. All this while skiing. I was struggling to keep the roll in my mouth through laughing. It was time. I fell and Dionne must have thought it was her lucky day as she did not have too far to walk up the mountain. She started checking my vital signs and I made it obvious I could not breathe. Then she opened my airways to find the horror of a chewed up bread roll with ketchup. Her job was to clear my airways. She looked at me with disgust, called me a bastard and took off her glove. I winked at her as she removed the bread and ketchup from my mouth. "Still a bit more Dionne" I informed her. She was not happy. I could not stop laughing. We decided to call a truce on playing tricks on each other. But I did make sure that I told everyone at Après Ski drinks. With all Ski ranger courses, after every ski session everybody joined in the

tradition of a few beers known as après ski. Despite feeling knackered from the course and staying up till 3 in the morning and on the slopes for nine. This would be often the aperitivo to a long night. I remember one après Ski drink where we went in the bar and totally took over the jukebox. We were all started singing and dancing on the tables to classics such as Wonderwall, and then going mad to dance classics such as Insomnia and Firestarter. This tiny little ski bar had only opened for the season that day. He must have thought he was in for one hell of a season. On one night on every course specially selected rangers would be told that they have to organise a quiz night. The quiz night is a regular part of an après ski programme and depending on the resort you were in could be a lively affair. Often the people told to organise it were new rangers or new to repping. They had to tailor it to their audience. Which was us. It was always a no holds barred night and always the liveliest night on the course. The managers also took part in the course. One of them was a lady called Mary approximately thirty five - forty, who had worked in many resorts and always came across as straight laced. I was told that on the quiz night she was pretty lively. Also a lot of the time all the supervisors and area managers would join in as well. I never did get to organise one, but on my first one I was shocked at the mayhem. There was changing clothes rounds where underwear swapping was a regular event with full nudity from both sexes. Mary the manager was heavily involved in the sexual positions games and she knew far more than me. She also got a question wrong and the forfeit was she had to give a blow job to a banana. Now I thought there is no way she will do it. She didn't just do it, there was foreplay tongues and everything and was on this banana for about five minutes. The quiz master said she only had to give it a quick kiss. After her performance a few of the rangers tried it on with her, but she was married and soon sent them packing. The ski ranger courses would become a complete shag fest despite men outnumbering women. I remember one night on one course my roommate came back with a girl called Kelly. She was enormous and twice the size of Andy who was with her. I knew Andy would regret it in the morning which I thought would be quite funny. They were trying to be quiet and she bollocked him "You are taking up all the room" Andy was pissed and did not come out with the most complimentary line. "I'm taking up the room; you are twice the fucking size of me." They then started shagging. I was in the next bed and I was a bit worried that she was either jump on me or eat me! and the rooms were small so I went back to the bar. I was not listening to that. I went downstairs and there was chaos everywhere and there was going to be some sore heads in the morning. Some of the rangers were getting off with some of the managers. This was a no-no for the managers but they were that pissed they did not care. I had a bit of a bonus and ended up pulling this girl called Katie who was quite lovely. She was a bit of a laugh and I hadn't really chatted to her on the course or been placed with her in any of the ski groups We got on really well had a few drinks and she started kissing me. I couldn't believe it. I was in bed an hour ago ready to go to sleep. She suggested going to my room. "There are people in it" I replied. She didn't seem to mind. We got into my room and saw a mountain under sheets which was Kelly and a smaller Andy next to her. Katie then grabbed me into the bathroom and quickly got my trousers off. I did not argue with her. We then had sex in the bathroom which ended up being very noisy. At the end, to the embarrassment of Katie, Andy had obviously woken up and gave us a loud round of applause. I went out and gave him a bow. The next morning there was a lot of sore heads. The area managers were having breakfast and were looking rather sheepish. A few of the lads who had copped off with them were relaying their adventures to all that listened. The Ski ranger courses would finish with us then all making our way to the country we were working in. There was obviously a lot of partying and drinking between the Ski rangers but there was also great friendships formed in short spaces of time. You would never work in the same resort as another ranger so the weeks together were always special. There was great camaraderie which I had never experienced on any other course. We even had a ski ranger salute which was similar to the three amigos salute but with more of a sexual edge. There was a lot of copping off between the rangers but it wasn't the main part of it, just something that happened. Unusually amongst young people there were no fights or arguments just plenty of piss taking, and they were always a pleasure to go on. So after saying goodbye to the rangers of different countries, it would be on to join the rest of your new colleagues in the country you were working in. The rangers would be

joining the reps and kiddy reps where the course would be a bit country specific and no Skiing and no après ski. This did not mean there would be no drinking or pulling. Far from it, as with the reps and kid reps the male/ female ratio evened itself out and they did not know what had happened on the ranger course. This was the course where you had to behave though to ensure you got a good ski resort to work in for the next 4 months. The Area managers who had been getting pissed and pulling on the Rangers course were now professional as they had to do the choosing and they were the fountain of knowledge of all things ski, apparently! There was obviously still plenty going on socially as well with most retiring to the bar after the course and dinner. With ski resorts there was always more of a mixture of ages than in the summer resorts. On one of the nights four or five of the new reps would be instructed to organise a bar crawl with activities in the ski resort we were in. This was tough in many ways. Often the ski resort at this stage was not fully open, so we would have to use bars that were probably not suitable. Also it was still a course so even though drinking was encouraged you had to be up for work in the morning. The night was always near the end of the course, so if there were any budding relationships this was the time to strike. One thing you had to be careful of was that you did not cop off with someone who was going to be in the same resort as you as this could prove awkward for a lot of people. Anybody who did usually did not end up in the same resort, as the managers always had an ear to the ground and knew what was going on. The courses, whether they were new rep courses, introduction to the countries or Ski rep or ranger were always full on in both counts. The days were always pretty intense and were there to give you an idea of the months ahead. You would practice welcome meetings, transfers, accounting, complaint procedures and also about excursions etc. and how to set up a resort. The first couple you do, you always have a feeling that you might not make it to resort, but as you get more confident you learn how to play the managers and trainers to get what you want. So the actual work stuff on the course was pretty boring, but the social side more than made up for it. So many young people made great friendships just based on spending a few days together in a hotel. So that's it after the training course I am ready to be a fully-fledged holiday rep. If anybody asks me a question I will know the answer, anybody has a problem I will be able to help. Anybody has a complaint I will be able to deal with it. Yeah right! Let's get on that plane and get to resort.

**Chapter 5 Arriving in Resort** I arrived back in Nuneaton on the Friday evening after my new reps training course. I had 4 nights left before spending the next 6 months in Corfu to become a holiday rep and I could not wait. The four days consisted of going out in the town with mates, and visiting my Dad spending some time with my mum and then of course Debbie. It was a crazy few days also making sure I had plenty of stuff to get me through the next 6 months. Obviously Greece is not a third world country so I knew I would be alright for most things. I did buy lots of new underwear as quite a few people on the course said laundrettes are not commonplace. Also quite a few people said they were coming out so I could always top up on supplies. The day came May 2nd 1995 and I was on an evening flight to Corfu from Birmingham. My dad dropped me off and I checked in with a case that was way over the luggage allowance. The check in staff knew I was a rep so let me off any payment. The following summer I got flown to Athens and then we got driven and ferried to Corfu. That seemed like it took a week so this was an easier journey in comparison. There were quite a lot of new reps on the flight and underneath all the bravado there were a few nerves. We did not even know where we would be sleeping that night. I did have a pint in the bar to calm my nerves, but only the one. I didn't want to arrive in Corfu pissed. Nigel the knob was there with his guitar trying to be cool, and arguing that he wanted to take the guitar with him on the plane. Scouse Paul was there as well as a few other reps. We were on the plane with a new intake of holiday makers and it was hard to believe that we could be their reps in a few days. The worst thing was that they would have better suntans than us. I was seated next to a nice couple who obviously felt sorry for me and started talking to me. I told them that "I was one of a bunch of new reps on the flight, ready to start work in the morning" They looked at me horrified "Who is going to take us to the hotel when we arrive" I explained much to their relief that there were a lot of reps in Corfu already. Somebody on the course did explain that some punters do check in their brains at the airports. This was the first time I had come across it. It was in the early hours of the morning in Corfu when the pilot announced that we had landed. This would be the last time on a plane for six

months. I collected my large suitcase and made my way through security. There waiting were a group of reps stylishly dressed in canary yellow jackets, all smiling. It is now real and I will be doing that in a few days. I was directed to a lady called Tracey who was my supervisor and would be for the next three summers. She seemed friendly enough and told me that she would be taking me to my apartment and that another rep called Ann would pick me up at 8.30 and she would be showing me the ropes for the next few days. It was two thirty in the morning which meant five hours sleep if I was lucky. I was dropped off by Tracey and was in an apartment on my own in the middle of Corfu. I was excited so went for a little walk just to look at my surroundings. I Unpacked a little and I liked my apartment but did not know how long I would be staying in this one. Ann picked me up on the dot and I was not in uniform yet as I was just shadowing her. Ann was a bit older, very tanned and had worked for Thomson for a number of years. You could tell this by the way she spoke with the customers and performed her welcome meetings. She was excellent and judged the mood of the punters perfectly. She dealt with complaints of which there were many, confidently. I could not believe how many there were. Surely people just wanted to enjoy their holiday. She did four welcome meetings that day and each one was as perfect as the others. The excursion booking forms were flooding in. I finally got to speak to Ann over lunch and she gave me the heads up on the managers and other reps. In the area most of the reps were girls. Tracey was the boss and there was big boss of Corfu, Parga and a few other places on the Ionian Sea. His name was Vasillis Vasilliades. Half Greek, Half South African. She told me he can be a real bastard and it was important to keep on the right side of him. She also said he knows everyone worth knowing on Corfu. Great that would be something to look forward to. There would be a whole Island meeting in two days where I would get to meet him and all the other reps. The next two days, I hardly had chance to breathe shadowing Ann during her visits and welcome meetings and Transfers. It seemed a lot of the transfers were in the middle of night. This would mean no sleep and then working a full day with welcome meetings. By the time the whole Island meeting happened I was knackered already. I was due to do my first transfer the next day and I honestly felt like I did not have a clue. I didn't even know where most of the hotels were. Let's hope the drivers do. I hadn't even had a beer. I had not really seen any of Corfu. The first few days I just followed Ann around. She did tell me it gets easier and is always hard when you come out and the season has already started. At the island meeting, I finally got to see some of the beauty of the Island. We had a drive round and I got to see a couple of the beautiful bays that Corfu has to offer, and the hotel was in a gorgeous setting. I managed to escape my canary jacketed friends for a few minutes and just have a drink at a hotel bar. I sat down and just looked at the view over the Ionian sea and thought despite the lack of excitement and all the running around in the first few days, I did not want be back in the UK. While looking at the view, a chap sat down next to me. He was a big fella, Greek looking but did not speak with a Greek accent. "What are you doing?" he asked I was quite surprised by this up front question from a stranger, but as I was in a uniform, thought best of telling him to mind his own business. "I am just having a minute to admire the view. I have been here for three days and this is the first time I have had chance to do it" "Bollocks" he said. "You have been getting pissed I bet" "I haven't even had a drink yet" I said. I was getting curious who this big fella was, and then I detected a bit of a South African accent and realised I was speaking to Vasilis Vassiliades the Manager of Corfu. "Are you my new boss?" I asked. "Yes" was the reply. Now I had heard that he was a bit of a bastard, and was unsure of how to play it. I held out my hand and said "I am pleased to meet you. I am Paul" "I learnt to read years ago" was his reply looking at my name badge. He did shake my hand and then asked. "Do you prefer football or Rugby?" What a strange question. I was wondering if this was a man test or something. I lied with my reply" Rugby" thinking he is a South African and they are more into Rugby than football and the World Cup was being played there this year. "Good man. I hate football. It's played by pussies and you English seem to love it. It's the rugby World Cup this year and If South Africa wins it I will give you an extra day off" he said. "Well that's not going to happen" I replied cheekily. He looked at me and said "we will see" South Africa did win, however I was right as he never gave me an extra day off. Later on Tracey my Supervisor was introducing Vasilis to the team and said "this is Paul" "We've met" was his reply. She looked at me in shock and wondered if I had dropped myself in it.

At the meeting we went through quite a lot of info about the island and targets for sales, complaint ratios and questionnaires. This is the way we were to be measured. Sales were based on excursion and car hire sales. We were given an amount in Drachmas per holiday guest we were meant to achieve. Excursion sales were a massive revenue stream for the tour operators, and there was a bit of pressure to achieve these, however not as much as companies like Club 18-30. I did want to sell excursions though as I wanted to get as much money as possible in my UK bank account for when I got home. A lot of reps were good at chasing up guests and asking how they were, but not very good at following up on excursion enquiries. The Complaint ratio target was a strange one as far as I was concerned. Thomson was trialing this scheme where they tried to deal with complaints and pay compensation in resort as opposed to waiting for the letter to get sent back in the UK. This system was a bit open to abuse and I will explain a bit more later. The customer survey questionnaire's (CSQ's) were the big one and what counted most to the managers and Vasilis. The questionnaires were filled out by the punters on the plane home and there were a couple of questions about the reps on them. The result we were looking for was that the holiday makers would put you down as excellent. I naively thought this would be easily achieved as I thought most people on holiday would be determined to have a good time and be very chilled out. My first two months were good but nothing fantastic. I then thought I would give the guests a bit of a push. During a lot of my summers I did a quiz/party night. I always had the final question for twenty points instead of the standard one. The question went as follows; "If you get a questionnaire on the plane ride home and it asks a question about your holiday rep. Will you tick that they are Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor?" I did it with a smile on my face and it always brought a bit of stick from the guests but it was all good natured. I am sure if anyone thought I was poor then they would have put poor, but it made my customers aware that these CSQ's were important to me. My scores did go up, however when I did not do the quiz they were still very good. Thomson had a lot of staff in Corfu, with seventy two reps of those ten were men, and five of those were gay. Six managers/ supervisors four women, two men who were also gay. There was an office team and then Vasilis. It was a surprise to me half of the male reps were gay. I will be honest before I became a holiday rep, I did not know any gay people. I wasn't homophobic; I just did not know any or come across gay people. Speaking to some of the gay reps, quite often they had not come out of the closet back home and it was a bit of a way to find themselves without the pressure of family and friends judging them. Personally I became good friends with a few gay reps and this is due to me travelling and working overseas. I would have probably been a bit ignorant in my views if I had not. I remember being good mates with a rep called Andy who was quite effeminate in his ways, who had not told his family and friends he was gay. When his parents came out to visit him he was at the airport as was I, and I could not believe how different he was acting. His voice was a bit more butch than normal. I took the piss out of him a bit and within earshot of his folks as he was leaving said "are you playing five a side on Thursday, as all the boys are going out on the beer after" I think he smiled as he quietly called me a wanker. So that left sixty two reps that were female. There was definitely a good selection of beauties. I was determined not to have a relationship with anyone; however after my liaison with Lauren, it did change my view of things that a lot of girls were after a good time as well. We were then split up into areas and we had a team of reps that consisted of mainly females, two of whom were stunners Linda and Lily. There were some kiddy reps as well one called Heather who for some reason seemed to have taken a dislike to me. She got on well with Nigel the Knob, so that could have been the reason, as I had hardly had chance to speak with her. There was also one called Anne who seemed quite nice but in the shadow of Heather. There was also an Irish girl called Jasmine who surprised me with her first question to me. "You're gay aren't you?" "No, I am not" I replied. "It doesn't bother me if you are, most male reps are gay" She said. "It doesn't bother me if you think that I am, as I am not, but please don't think the fact that I won't try it on with you is due to me being gay" She did not pursue her questions anymore. As annoying as she was, her boyfriend, Greg who was out for a few weeks was a good bloke. I met him on my first night out which was after the resort meeting. He had done a few seasons and was giving me the ins and outs of working abroad and we both appreciated male company. We drank a lot that night and he asked me which rep I was going to try it on with

first. "Aaah, I am not going to do it, as I don't want a relationship with anyone." "Bollocks" he said. We had a bit of a wager that I would not shag another rep in the first two months of working in Corfu. I lost the bet within about five hours. I am not sure how it happened but we had a few drinks as did some of the girls and Anne and I ended up kissing in this night club much to the annoyance of her mate Heather. We ended up going back to hers and we had quite a wild night, hopefully keeping her flat mate awake. I went and grabbed a coffee in the morning, and Greg was in the cafe laughing his head off that I had lost the bet. Now, I am presuming it was nothing to do with me but I was shocked to hear a few days later that Heather and Anne were going home. Heather had decided she did not like it and Anne was following her. I grabbed a word with Anne and asked her why she was going. She just said that she and Heather had agreed to go. I said you should stay and could tell she wanted to but was feeling pressured to quit. I told her she was wasting an opportunity, but there was no changing her mind. Arriving in Corfu for my first summer was definitely the hardest one to deal with as I basically did not have a clue about the job. I wasn't the only one. Speaking to all the reps who started they were absolutely knackered and did not look like the fresh faced sun tanned holiday reps we were meant to look like. In the space of a few days I had to know all about the island, learn the transfer, work out where everything in resort, plan a welcome meeting and I was meant to be the fountain of all knowledge to our holidaymakers. Either that or be the best blagger in the world!

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Have you ever had that feeling where you just need to do something exciting?  
Have you ever had that feeling when you are so bored you need to tell everyone to piss off?  
Have you ever had that feeling where you feel your life is going to be boring and that you will just live in the same town forever?  
Paul had those feeling and did something about it  
One Long holiday is the humorous memoirs from a young man called Paul who left his boring life and dead end job and went abroad to work as a holiday rep in Greece, France, Andorra, Portugal and Italy. It is a warts and all book about what it is like for a youngster to give up everything and to live and work in a holiday resort.  
Like many people Paul dreamed of living and working abroad and partying until he dropped. In the UK he lived for a Saturday night and felt he was being pulled into the vortex of settling down, getting married and having children.  
Paul managed to escape his boring job and getting married too young and worked in many resorts including the lively resort of Kavos, ski resorts in Italy, Andorra and France, Portugal and Italy for a total of eight years.  
In those eight years Paul partied hard, met loads of woman, led bar crawls, took part in cabarets, woke up in places he shouldn't have, dealt with thousands of complaining guests, loads of drunk guests, dealt with guests being attacked, guests attacking him, death and even survived an avalanche that destroyed half of the resort he lived in.  
It also chronicles the laughs and camaraderie of young people packing up all of their things and moving to a foreign country without knowing a soul. So if you have thought about giving up everything to live in the sun, want to know what goes on behind the scenes in a holiday resort or simply read the memoirs of a young lad who left his home and country to have the time of his life then this book is for you.

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Holidays 2020 2021 - The Texas Book Festival office has closed down for the holidays, but Ducks, Newburyport by Lucy Ellman, which is one, long, continuous International Holidays - We are an alternative to traditional car rental and car ownership. The freedom of cars on demand in hundreds of cities, ready to book by the. No matter where or how long you drive, 180 miles are included per day. Zipcar is the perfect complement to the bus and trainâ€”whether it's local errands or weekend adventures. How Long Should You Go On Holiday For To Feel Completely - Find & Book Airbnb: Holiday Rentals, Homes, Experiences & Places - Travel Guides & Travel Information - Lonely Book your vacation rentals and hotels in Barcelona - WestJet official site Southwest Schedule Extended: Book Your Winter Flights Now - ... leader in small group trekking and cycling adventure holidays to all seven continents, testAvoid Single Use Plastics Expedia analysis: When to book hotel, flight for summer vacation - Build the perfect trip with our Hawaii vacation package deals. relaxing and enjoyable as possible, from the moment you book your flight to long after you arrive. Saga Holidays - Over 50s Holidays & Cruises UK & Worldwide - Click to book customized cheap Thailand holiday packages & get exciting deals for Thailand holiday packages. Walkthrough the long tunnels and spot stingrays, jellyfish, and sharks. Enjoy a. Are you looking for an ideal island vacation? TUIHolidays.ie - Jet2holidays FAQ - He'd had to watch as his brothers had been almost taken down one by one by magic There wasn't anything between themâ€”there hadn't been for too long. Thomas Cook Tours and Travels: Flights, Hotels, Forex, Visa - Book cheap holidays with Sunshine.co.uk and pay bit by bit for your holiday until 4 weeks before you fly! ATOL Protected, ABTA P6623.

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