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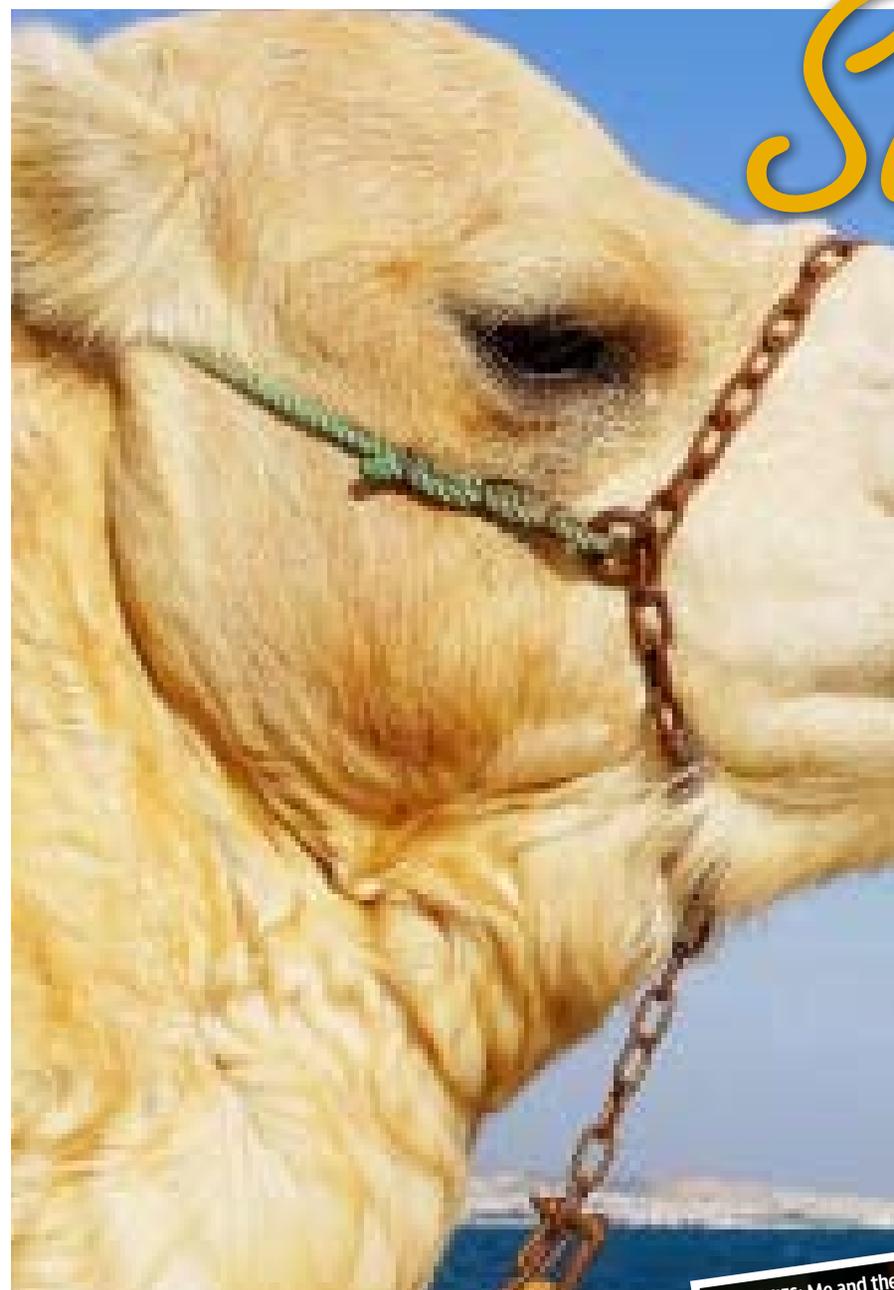
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Your Life



Tall and blond, he was the strong silent type... but had a serious case of bad camel breath. To be fair, he WAS actually a camel, and he was also the closest thing I got to a good hump on my *Singles With Kids* holiday.

It sounded like the perfect solution to my search for romance - me, my three-and-a-half-year-old daughter Jesse, and nine other single parents and their kids on the coast of Tunisia. I imagined one big happy family, and the chance to check out a few cute, single dads.

Well, the first bit was true - we did all bond and our kids had lots of fun playing together, but the single dads were in very short supply. In fact, there was just... er... one.

Yep, nine women to one man. It was a bit like a middle-aged version of the *Playboy Mansion*, with dad-of-two Guy playing Hugh Hefner to us bunny mummies. SWK coordinator Sarah Williams apologised: "Sorry, ladies, we normally get more than one man on a trip, but this time we had to turn down two other men as they booked too late."

"It's about a 70:30 split of women to men and maybe more on our camping trips as blokes love erecting tents," she said, straight-faced.

Accompanied by her cute son Jay, nine,

Sarah continued in her friendly West Midlands accent: "In fact, things often go bump in the night on camping breaks."

Guy didn't seem overly worried when faced with spending a week with nine single women. Quietly confident, he told tales of parenting woe and all the mentalists he'd dated.

In fact, Guy was so good with all the kids, we wondered why the heck he was single - us mums would have all given our GHDs to have a husband like him, but all for different reasons.

Jesse's daddy is dead, some of the kids' parents are divorced, and some have never known their fathers at all.

Actually Guy was almost too good to be true, and I got the impression he was so organised he probably fed his kids breakfast the night before to save time on the school run. Still, he'll make someone a lovely wife.

The first few days of the break were slightly marred by cold, rainy weather. We all got together for the welcome chat and the front of SWK's information pack said "Welcome to sunny Tunisia. You've left the English drizzle behind..."

The drizzle had followed us but everyone refused to be bowed by the weather, and

Camels were the closest I came to a good hump

BUNNIES: Me and the



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- **PIXIWOOL:** How to get Alesha's glow
- **CONSUMER:** Gadgets tried and tested

- **COLEEN:** My wife seems so distant
- **RUSSELL GRANT:** Love, cash, careers

sun, sea, sand... and snacks

My romance-free week on a singles holiday

WHEN MUM-OF-ONE **SIOBHAN MCNALLY**, 43, JOINED A HOLIDAY GROUP FOR SINGLES, THE CAMELS OUTNUMBERED THE MEN



ANIMAL INSTINCTS?: Not even close!



Other mummies with Guy



BEACH: Or a thoroughfare?



RAVE: Me, rock 'n' roll John and Sophie

Germans, Brits, and French were at war – battle of the bulge

trainers, while the Germans let it all hang out underneath oversized beige shirts, topped off with little blond taches.

But it was not until the next day after breakfast that it became clear that the small, dark French men were winning the bulge war with their budgie smugglers.

Then there was the Irish contingent - rock 'n' roll John who spent his afternoons recovering in a red kaftan, before glamming it up again for the disco with glitter headbands, flares and extreme karaoke.

When the sun came out, I joined some of the mums round the pool, who were keeping one eye on the kids while reading their holiday books. Sophie, mum to five-year-old Bella, sighed as she put Fifty Shades Darker down: "Look at all these mozzie bites! Mind you, they're the only bites I'm getting at night here."

Nine-year-old Jessica's mum Angela agreed: "I know, the place isn't exactly swarming with Christian Greys."

"Anyone got plenty of puff?" I asked. "Jesse's rubber ring needs inflating."

"Yeah, ask Alex," sniggered Angela, "She's a good blower!"

"Is it time for lunch yet?" asked Alex, mum of Sofia, four, and Bella, six. I replied: "It's only been two hours since breakfast!" But she had a point, we were getting so used to four meals a day that our bodies were entering starvation mode without regular top-ups.

Within days, we were having trouble fitting into our clothes. All-inclusive food and booze deals may be healthy for the

bank balance, but I could feel my arteries beginning to harden.

Next to the pool bar area, the resort's animation team were beginning their daily dance to whip the sunbathers into a pre-lunch feeding frenzy.

Team leader Tarek minced over to us, "Are you lovely ladies married? Come to my t'ai chi class and get big breaths, no?"

Tarek was like a Tunisian version of ballroom dancing Barry in Hi-De-Hi, all camp flourish and big smiles while trying to get his leg over your cha-cha-cha. Not my type at all, but then I try to avoid men in polyester - the sparks tend to come from their outfits rather than passion.

Having exhausted the possibilities around the pool after a day or so, I moved to the beach for a better view.

The stretch of sand between the sun loungers and the sea was a bit of a busy road for galloping horsemen, lolling camels, hawkers, and the occasional wide-load German.

But the camel drivers were cute, if you could get past the exotic odour.

"Allo, madam? English? Francais?" asked Emad. He was

politer than many beach traders, most of whom promised they could get you to the moon on a stick. "Er... can't you tell by my pink suntan and sense of irony?" I replied.

Griming, Emad introduced me to his blond camel saying: "He likes Coca-Cola." But I draw the line at buying drinks for camels.

Anyway, who needs a holiday romance? The great thing about a Singles With Kids holiday is being part of group of like-minded people in the same boat as you. The kids all make friends, leaving grown-ups to indulge in some much needed me-time.

Then, at the end of our holiday, coming through Gatwick passport control, Jesse decided to kick off when she realised her week of mini discos was over.

As I tried to calm her down, I met the eyes of a gorgeous tall, dark-haired bloke, laughing at Jesse's tantrum.

The world stopped as we held each other's gaze, then the luggage carousel numbers appeared on the screens, the room cleared and he was gone.

Hello, if you're reading this. I was the tired, ageing blonde with the red-faced daughter. Of all the passport controls in the world, you had to walk into mine...



POSE: Jesse hits the beach

● FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.SINGLEWITHKIDS.CO.UK OR CALL 0845 166 8119. EMAIL EVENTS@SINGLEWITHKIDS.CO.UK