

Kuoni announces participants in the Holiday Health Experiment

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Kuoni and the UK's largest healthcare charity Nuffield Health have selected six individuals to journey to radically different parts of the world as part of a unique study called 'The Holiday Health Experiment'. The experiment aims to better understand the health impact of different types of holiday on the wellbeing of the body and mind.

2,845 Brits entered The Holiday Health Experiment from April to June 2012. Before, during and after the trips all six individuals will undergo a variety of medical and psychological tests to look at the effects 'everyday life' has on the body and mind. The data will then be compared to that gathered during and after the holiday. This experiment is the first of its kind conducted by a UK travel company in conjunction with a medical team consisting of doctors, physiologists and further assistance from Christine Webber, a leading psychotherapist.

Among the participants is Sarah Denning, a midwife from Hertfordshire, who will travel to Meeru Island Resort & Spa in the Maldives. Sarah has chosen friend, Sarah Bastida as her travelling companion and they can look forward to 12-days of rest and relaxation with a 'no news, no shoes' feel. Sarah Denning said: "Helping new life into the world demands 100%, 24/7, as a physical and emotional commitment. It's a treat to have time to focus on my wellbeing. To make this a girls' holiday where two great friends can chill-out together, not having to worry about make-up and men, is an added bonus."

Glossop based husband and wife, Ben Clarke and Stacy Young will travel with Kuoni and Earthwatch to Peru to help with teams of researchers and conservationists aboard the Amazon Riverboat Exploration. Stacy and Ben said: "We got married in September last year and are now at a crossroads with tricky decisions to make about careers, finances, travel and babies. It would be interesting to see how immersion in a different environment will help shape our thinking about our future and our wellbeing, and even the role a holiday has to play in making big decisions."

South Hants based couple, Hilary Durkan and Steve Duff, both coastguard officers, will travel on Kuoni's 'Ancient Thailand' tour with Asian Trails, an adventure through ancient Thai Kingdoms. Hilary said: "We work in a challenging environment, always 'on call' and needing to be available for our volunteers 24/7. We all need time out and it intrigues me as to how a holiday will make me feel about my everyday stresses and how important a break is to help me deal with them."

Chris Jones, Head of Physiology at Nuffield Health, said: "On a day-to-day basis, our bodies give us subtle physical signals for stress or tiredness that may be caused by our busy modern lives and we all intuitively know that a holiday can help us re-charge our batteries. This case study-based experiment will give us an interesting insight into how holidays may impact on a person's wellbeing."

Says Christine Webber, psychotherapist on this project: "Anecdotally, we know that holidays can help people to re-charge their batteries, and to re-connect with each other and rediscover the joy they find in each other's company. I hope to discover whether people can be aware of the factors that bring about positive changes during vacations, and can then introduce some of these factors on their return home, in a bid to make their normal day-to-day existences more mentally and physically healthy."

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About Kuoni:

Kuoni was established in 1906 in Switzerland by Alfred Kuoni, a visionary adventurer and explorer of his time who opened some of Europe's first travel agencies. Kuoni has branch operations in over 40 countries. Its portfolio includes Koh Samui holidays (<http://www.kuoni.co.uk/en/holiday/asia/thailand/thailand-beaches/koh-samui/pages/default.aspx>), Mexico holidays (<http://www.kuoni.co.uk/en/holiday/north-and-central-america/mexico/pages/default.aspx>), Hawaii holidays (<http://www.kuoni.co.uk/en/holiday/north-and-central-america/usa/hawaii/pages/default.aspx>), luxury holidays (<http://www.kuoni.co.uk/en/pages/default.aspx>) and honeymoon destinations (<http://www.kuoni.co.uk/en/honeymoons/pages/honeymoons.aspx>).

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