

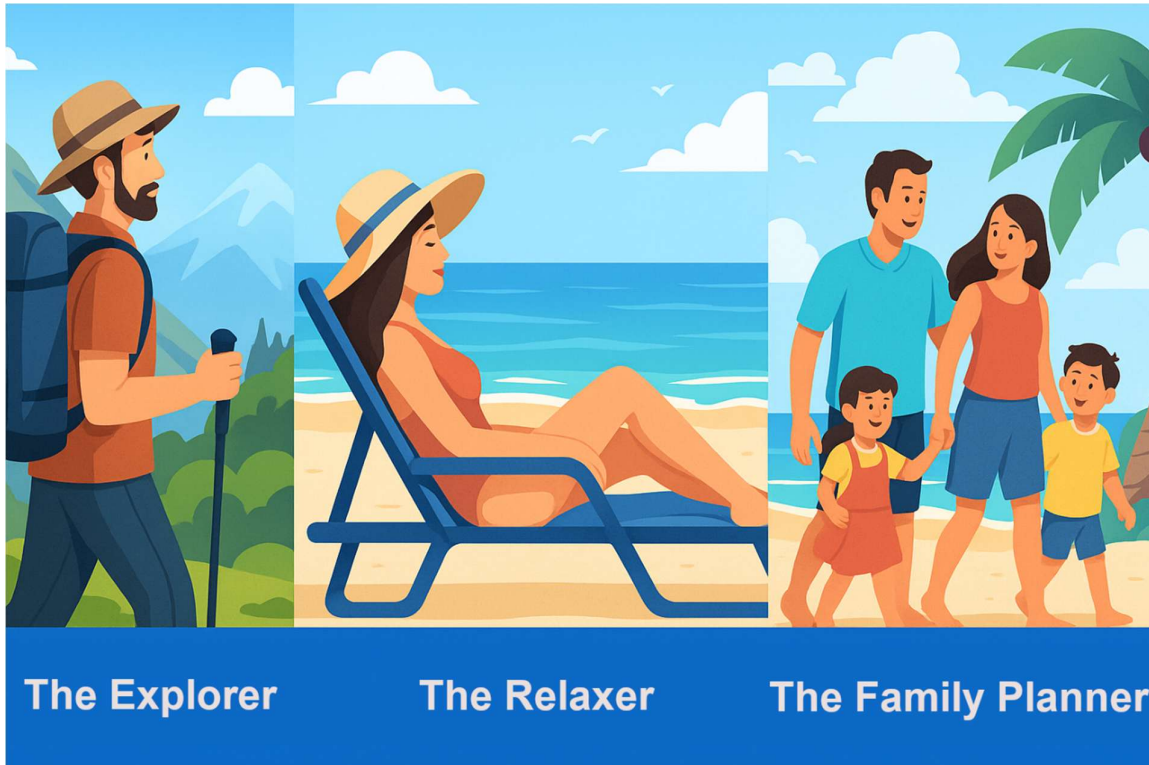


Holiday AI Prompts – From Mercia AI

Hi everyone! Its summer and at the time of typing (July 2025) its *roasting* hot in the UK, and all over Europe. At Mercia AI, we love to show you how to use AI responsibly and effectively, and what better way to do that then to show you how AI Tools can help you plan your holiday!

We'll show you how to enter prompts into AI Chatbots in order to discover your ideal holiday. AI Chatbots like ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Perplexity and Grok all have free tiers which you can use. Plus, we'll look at how Google Maps can provide further insight into your destination.

So pack the suntan lotion, get the passport renewed and let's get your holiday planned. Because you're worth it!



The 3-Step Prompt Method

Ask → Get → Refine

1. **Ask:** Start with a clear, descriptive prompt
2. **Get:** See what the AI gives you — it's usually 70–80% there
3. **Refine:** Tweak the results or follow up with questions to improve relevance

The Explorer

You love the thrill of discovering new places. Your ideal holiday includes wild landscapes, hiking trails, and experiences far from the usual tourist traps.

The Prompt:

Act as a travel planner. Suggest three holiday destinations in Europe for a solo traveller who wants adventure, nature, and great hiking in September. Include average costs and travel tips.

Why This Works:

- “Act as a travel planner” sets the AI’s role and tone
- “Three destinations” keeps the output clear and manageable
- “Solo traveller... adventure, nature, hiking” gives rich context
- “September” provides a seasonal anchor
- “Include average costs and tips” defines the output format

Change the prompt to suit your requirements. For example:

- Swap Europe for anywhere with direct flights from Birmingham
- Add a budget limit: “Under £600 for 5 days
- Add variety: “Include 1 city, 1 mountain, 1 coastal destination”
- Want rustic? Try: “Avoid touristy areas. Prioritise national parks and local stays”

3 Adventure Holidays in Europe for Solo Travellers (September Edition)

1. Slovenia – Triglav National Park

- **Why go:** Ideal for solo hiking, with safe, scenic trails and alpine charm.
- **Top Hike:** *Seven Lakes Valley* or climb *Mount Triglav* (with a local guide).
- **Average Costs:**
 - Flights (from UK): £90–£140 return
 - Accommodation: £30–£50/night
 - Daily spend: £40–£60
- **Travel Tips:**
 - Stay in **Bled** or **Bohinj** for easy trail access.
 - Slovenia is safe and public transport is reliable.
 - Triglav requires a helmet and harness for summit routes.

2. Portugal – Azores (São Miguel Island)

- **Why go:** A volcanic island with hot springs, crater lakes, and coastal hikes.
- **Top Hike:** *Sete Cidades* crater loop or *Lagoa do Fogo*.
- **Average Costs:**
 - Flights: £160–£250 (via Lisbon)
 - Accommodation: £40–£60/night
 - Daily spend: £50–£70
- **Travel Tips:**
 - Best weather is early to mid-September.
 - Public buses are limited — rent a car for full access.
 - Pack layers: weather shifts quickly on the island.

3. Italy – The Dolomites

- **Why go:** World-class via ferrata, mountain huts, and solo-safe trekking routes.
- **Top Hike:** *Tre Cime di Lavaredo, Seceda ridgeline.*
- **Average Costs:**
 - Flights to Venice/Innsbruck: £80–£120
 - Rifugio stays: £45–£70/night incl. dinner
 - Daily spend: £60–£85
- **Travel Tips:**
 - September = fewer crowds but great conditions.
 - Book rifugios early — some close end of Sept.
 - South Tyrol has strong German influence; dual-language signage is common.

The Relaxer

You want to get away from it all. No alarm clocks. No hiking boots. Just peace, comfort, and maybe a poolside drink. If it's scenic, slow-paced, and stress-free, you're in.

The Prompt

Act as a travel planner. Suggest three relaxing holiday destinations in Europe for a solo traveller who wants quiet beaches, warm weather, and minimal hassle in September. Include average costs and travel tips.

Why This Works

- “Act as a travel planner” sets the tone and role clearly
- “Relaxing... solo traveller... quiet beaches...” gives clear intent
- “Minimal hassle” helps filter out busy resorts or awkward transfers
- “Include average costs and travel tips” ensures the AI adds practical info
- “September” keeps it seasonally relevant

Try These Tweaks

- Add: “Include destinations with direct flights from London or Birmingham”
- Try: “Add a wellness hotel or spa recommendation”
- Avoid: “Exclude places known for nightlife or party crowds”
- Budget version: “All under £600 for a 5-night stay including flights”

1. Naxos, Greece

- **Why go:** A peaceful island with golden beaches, friendly locals, and fewer crowds than Santorini or Mykonos.
- **Top Spots:** Agios Prokopios Beach, Chalki village, and the Temple of Demeter.
- **Average Costs:**
 - Flights (via Athens): £120–£180 return
 - Accommodation: £35–£60/night
 - Daily spend: £40–£55
- **Travel Tips:**
 - Fly to Athens, then take a ferry (~4 hours).
 - September has warm weather (25–28°C) and calmer seas.
 - Naxos is walkable, but local buses are reliable and cheap.

2. Tavira, Portugal (Eastern Algarve)

- **Why go:** Tranquil coastal town with historic charm, empty beaches, and no rowdy nightlife.
- **Top Spots:** Ilha de Tavira (beach), Tavira Castle, and salt flats for bird watching.
- **Average Costs:**
 - Flights to Faro: £60–£100 return
 - Accommodation: £40–£70/night
 - Daily spend: £45–£60
- **Travel Tips:**
 - Short train ride from Faro airport (~40 minutes).
 - Take the ferry to Ilha de Tavira for quieter beaches.
 - Perfect weather in September — ~26°C and dry.

3. Puglia, Italy (Monopoli or Polignano a Mare)

- **Why go:** Stunning Adriatic coastline, charming old towns, and very few international tourists.
- **Top Spots:** Lama Monachile beach, old town promenades, and day trips to Alberobello or Ostuni.
- **Average Costs:**
 - Flights to Bari: £80–£130 return
 - Accommodation: £50–£85/night
 - Daily spend: £50–£70
- **Travel Tips:**
 - Fly into Bari, then take a direct train (30–40 mins).
 - Choose Monopoli for a more relaxed vibe, Polignano for cliff views.
 - Most beaches are free and walkable from the centre.

The Family Planner

You're travelling with children and want a holiday that's stress-free, affordable, and full of things to do for all ages. Think short flights, sandy beaches, splash pools, and no dramas.

The Prompt

Act as a travel planner. Suggest three family-friendly holiday destinations in Europe that are easy to reach, safe, and offer warm weather, fun activities for kids, and good value in September. Include average costs and travel tips.

Why This Works

- “Family-friendly” sets the tone and filters out adult-only spots
- “Easy to reach” = no long layovers or awkward transfers
- “Safe... warm... fun activities” provides context and priorities
- “Average costs and tips” gives practical, parent-ready info

Try These Tweaks

- Add: “Short-haul flights under 3 hours”
- Add: “Budget of £1,000 for 4 people, all-in”
- Include: “Options with kids’ clubs or splash pools”
- Change: “Suggest self-catering apartments instead of hotels”

1. Costa Dorada, Spain (Salou)

- **Why go:** A classic family destination with soft beaches, calm water, and PortAventura World (theme park + water park) nearby.
- **Top Picks:** Levante Beach, Aquopolis Water Park, day trip to Tarragona.
- **Average Costs:**
 - Flights to Reus or Barcelona: £60–£110 return
 - Hotels & family apartments: £55–£85/night
 - Daily spend (family of 3–4): £60–£80
- **Travel Tips:**
 - Reus is the closest airport; 15 mins by transfer
 - Flying into Barcelona adds train travel (~1 hr to Salou)
 - September = fewer crowds, sunny weather (27–29°C)

2. Algarve, Portugal (Alvor or Lagos)

- **Why go:** Safe, walkable towns with sandy beaches, warm sea, and plenty of outdoor fun.
- **Top Picks:** Dolphin-watching boat trips, Meia Praia beach, Lagos Zoo.
- **Average Costs:**
 - Flights to Faro: £70–£130 return
 - Accommodation: £50–£90/night
 - Daily spend: £55–£75
- **Travel Tips:**
 - Family-friendly hotels often include splash pools or playgrounds
 - Easy regional train access from Faro to Lagos (~2 hrs)
 - September stays warm (~26°C), but it's quieter than July/August

3. Lake Bled, Slovenia

- **Why go:** Peaceful alpine lake, shallow waters for kids, boat rentals, and a literal island castle.
- **Top Picks:** Bled Castle, rowing to the island church, the lakeside train.
- **Average Costs:**
 - Flights to Ljubljana: £100–£150 return
 - Guesthouses/apartments: £60–£100/night
 - Daily spend: £50–£70
- **Travel Tips:**
 - 35-minute drive from Ljubljana airport
 - Bike rentals, lake walks, and child-safe picnic spots
 - Weather in Sept is mild (21–24°C), perfect for younger families

This Holiday could be better!

AI responses are often **70–80% there**. The magic happens when you follow up with the right tweaks.

Here's how to turn a decent result into something *great*.

1. Ask Follow-Up Questions

AI not specific enough? Just ask it to improve its own answer.

"Can you make those destinations more budget-friendly for a family of four?"

"List only places with direct flights from Birmingham."

"Now add 2 hotel recommendations for each place."

2. Add or Remove Constraints

Adjust the tone, detail, or difficulty by changing your prompt slightly.

Want this?

Try saying this:

Shorter, simpler output *"Summarise each place in 2–3 lines."*

More detailed tips *"Include travel hacks or cost-saving tips."*

Avoid busy places *"Exclude destinations with large nightlife scenes or cruise crowds."*

Local experience *"Prioritise places with local food, small guesthouses, or markets."*

3. Experiment with Roles

You're not just talking to a chatbot — you're prompting a persona.

Try starting with:

- *"Act as a travel expert for families with young children..."*
- *"Act as a budget travel blogger..."*
- *"Act as a retired couple who've done this trip..."*

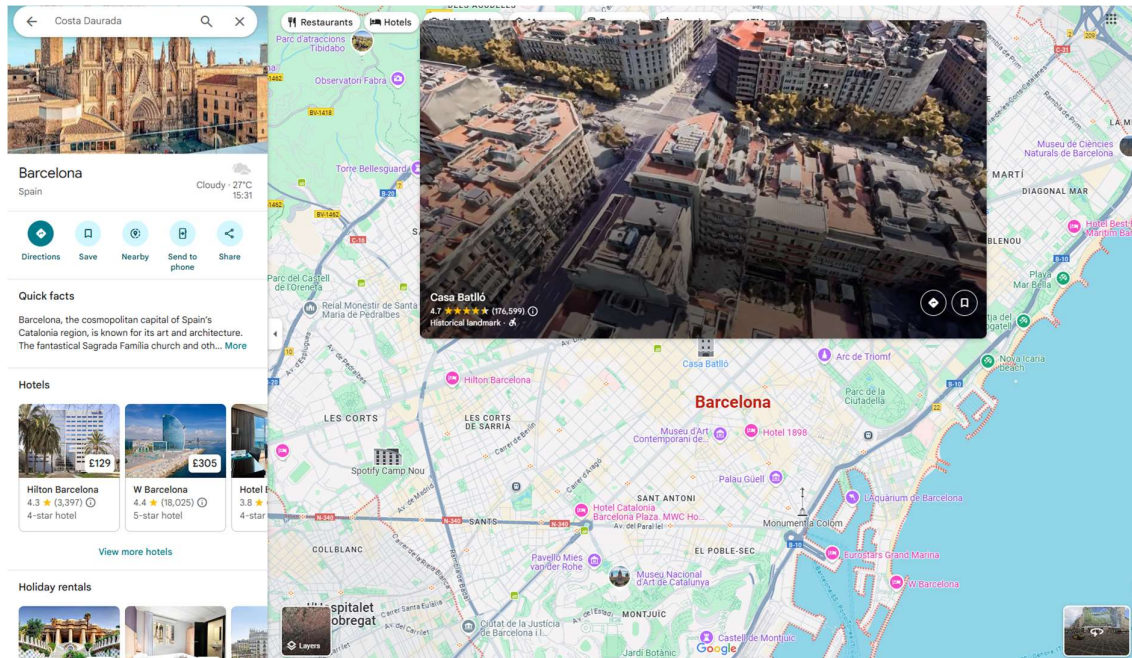
You'll often get more nuanced, relevant suggestions by changing the lens.

Refine and Perfect. Your getaway deserves nothing less.

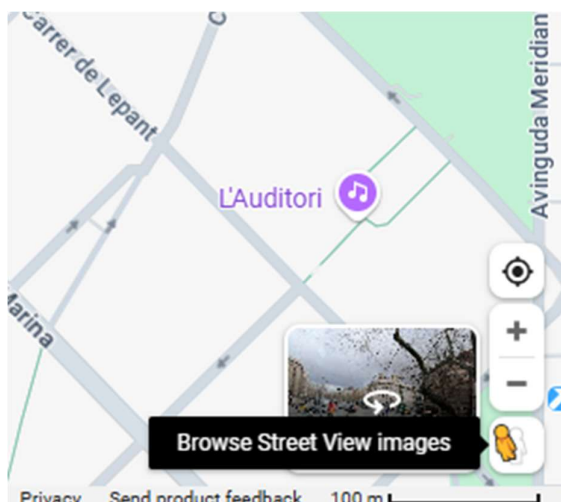
Don't settle for the first answer. AI is a conversation — not a search engine. The more you refine, the better it performs.

Let's go on a reconnaissance mission!

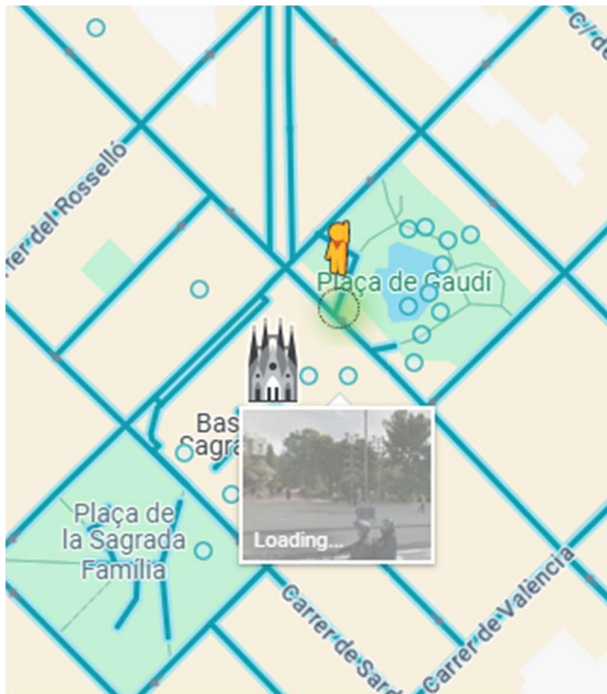
Want to check out where you could be going before leaving the house? Check out your proposed destination on Google Maps. You can view 3-D videos of famous landmarks by moving your mouse pointer over them on the map. Here's an example for Casa Batlló in Barcelona:



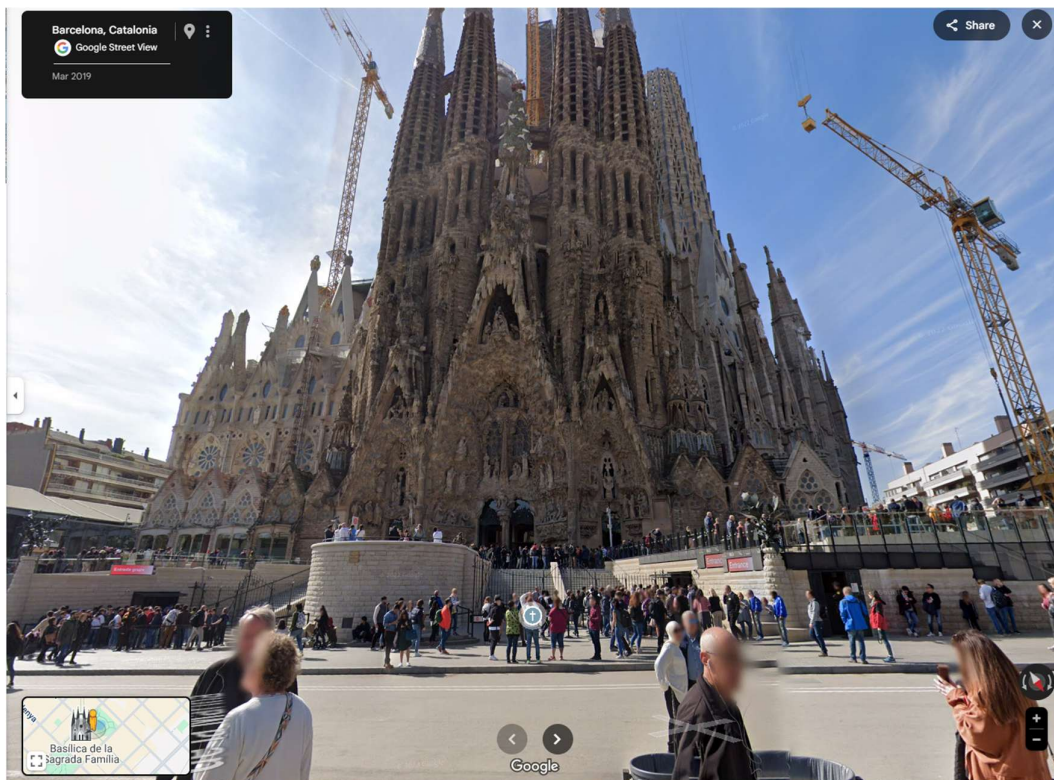
But wait, there's more. You can use the Street View images taken by Google. These images are often one or two years old, but they give you an idea of what you'll be walking into on your holiday. Just grab this yellow guy at the bottom-right corner of the map:



....and drag him onto a street (marked in blue) on the map:



...and drop him off and voila! You can now use the compass arrow in the bottom right corner to spin your view around of that exact location before you book your flight.



Closing Thoughts

Please be aware that **AI chatbots are prone to hallucinations and are often trained on old data** – so *always* check with your travel agent any information you’ve obtained from this document, or any chatbots you use.

I hope this guide proves useful in helping you plan your future holiday. No matter when and where you go, please stay safe, and have a great time.

This guide is part of the “Learning with Mercia AI” series. Want help applying AI to your everyday life or business? Explore more at merciaai.com.