

Fail-safe family hotels

A holiday with the kids can be one of the most special bonding experiences for a family, but it can also wreak havoc on your nerves. Relax! At these six hotels the little ones can play to their hearts' content while you catch up on some much-needed down time.

1 Umngazi River Bungalows Have a second honeymoon (with the kids)

Umngazi River Bungalows, near Port St Johns on the Wild Coast, is a family resort tucked between a river and the sea. The resort is aimed at families and honeymooners, which means you can leave the kids with the nanny while you and your better half pretend it's 1999 all over again.

Relax in a spa pool high up on the dune with a view of the sea; hike; swim; cycle or read a book. At night you can sip a cocktail in the bar while the kids (under 5) eat in a separate dining room.

For the kids? Children can go dune boarding, swim in the kiddies' pool, jump on the trampoline, play in the "creative corner" or go on one of the organised daily outings. To hire a nanny costs R100 for eight hours.

How do I get there? Port St Johns is about 350km south of Durban. Drive there via the N2 and the R61. The road is narrow and winding; watch out for pedestrians and livestock. In Port St Johns, follow signs to Umngazi River Bungalows.

Rates: From R815 per person, full board. The rates depend on the position of the chalet and the time of year. Children 11 years and younger get a discount.

Contact: 047 564 1115;

www.umngazi.co.za

– Jacques Nel

WILD AT HEART. The thatched bungalows blend in with the Wild Coast landscape and are situated within indigenous gardens.