



Our favourite ESCAPES

The *GH* team
pick their top
UK getaways...



Sleep in a treehouse

Says Joanne Finney,
books director

Being woken up at 6am on holiday is no one's idea of a good time, but when your alarm clock is a woodpecker lightly tapping the roof of your treehouse, it's hard to complain! Only an hour from Glasgow and Edinburgh, The Treehouses at Lanrick are a magical place to stay. Set in a private woodland, the estate is a haven of peace and quiet where you're likely to spot nuthatches, treecreepers and even red squirrels, which are common in this part of Scotland.

These cosy wooden lodges on stilts are super luxe, with super-king-size beds, walk-in rain showers and log-burning stoves (logs are provided for free). An added bonus (for some, at least) is that there's no TV and no wi-fi – although there is 4G if you can't do without. There are lovely touches, such as bird feeders on every balcony (and free bird seed to fill them when needed) and a welcome

breakfast hamper of local food.

One of the highlights of a stay is bathing under the night sky in a big copper tub, which each treehouse has on its balcony – add a glass of fizz and it can't be beaten. If you'd like something more strenuous, there are walks around the estate, including along the banks of the River Teith, where you might spot otters if you get lucky. Just four miles away is the Trossachs National Park, where there are hiking, climbing, mountain biking, canoeing, wild swimming and boat trips on Loch Lomond.

After a day of activity, there's nothing nicer than relaxing in the sauna that sits among the trees (it's shared with other guests but there's a rope you can put across the entrance to show it's occupied) and if you're feeling brave, follow it up with a dip in the ice-cold plunge pool. Massages in the privacy of your treehouse can also be booked. ➡



If you're after a bath with a view, The Treehouses at Lanrick, an hour from Edinburgh, should do nicely

DO IT: Stays at The Treehouses at Lanrick (lanricktreehouses.co.uk) start from £245 per night (minimum two-night stay).



Albert the French Bulldog (below) was thoroughly spoilt on his holiday in Devon, with beach and coastal walks

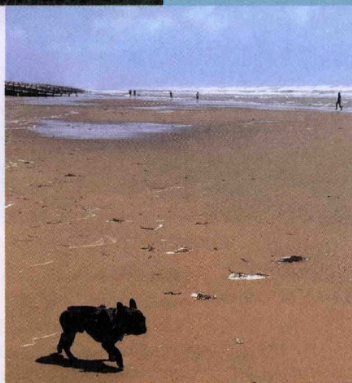


Take your dog away with you

Says Stacey Smith, senior food & drink editor

If you want to go on holiday with your furry friend, there are hundreds of dog-friendly hotels across the UK happy to host them. I took my French Bulldog, Albert, to The Mole Resort in North Devon for a long weekend and loved the fact that he was welcomed as warmly as I was. He got a welcome pack of treats and his own towel (there are warm outdoor taps to use after muddy walks) and our stylish eco lodge – complete with a fully equipped kitchen – had plenty of room for wagging tails as well as a private hot tub. With the stars overhead and my dog by my side, it was the perfect place to end the day. There are dog-friendly on-site activities, such as pottery sessions – we got his paw print on a plate – and disc golf using frisbees.

But the best thing about the resort is its location in the Devon countryside. We even got a personalised itinerary and maps showing the nearest woodlands, meadows and dog-friendly beaches. Saunton Sands, a beautiful three-mile beach, is a 45-minute drive away, as is Exmoor National Park and the Tarka Trail. You can also walk the Southwest Coast Path as seen in *The Salt Path*. And don't miss indulging in a traditional cream tea at dog-friendly The Cellar, the Mole Resort's on-site restaurant.



DO IT: The Mole Resort (themoleresort.co.uk) offers two-bedroom lodges from £250 a night in low season, with an additional charge of £20 per night per dog. Find other dog-friendly hotels through Pets Pyjamas (petspyjamas.com) or Dog Friendly Hotels (dogfriendlyhotels.co.uk).



Stay in a beach hut

Says Alexandra Friend, beauty expert

Clapboard walls, Miami-pastel hues and wicker and whitewash; so far, so beach shack. But not many beach shacks also have their own sunken cedar hot tub, outdoor sauna and Oonie pizza oven. Or how about a bubble-gum pink Aga and a basket of scones, biscuits and clotted cream fudge?





Stay in the beach hut of dreams at Three Mile Beach in Cornwall, where you can enjoy surfing, dog walks and Atlantic Ocean views

'It's the ultimate British staycation and one I can't recommend enough'

The two-bedroom bungalows at Three Mile Beach in Cornwall are next level self-catering accommodation, with better kit than most people have at home. If you'd rather hang up your apron, you can dine at Chomp, Three Mile's laid-back restaurant and bar.

The next morning, order an excellent flat white from the vintage coffee van, then saunter a few minutes across the road to Gwithian Beach. This deep slice of golden sand is quite simply one of the most glorious beaches in this part of Cornwall and there's room for everyone here (Three Mile is canine-friendly, too).

The pretty coastal paths here will make a walker out of anyone; we took an easy 1.4-mile hike past Godrevy Point to Mutton Cove, where we lost at least

an hour to seal-watching (bonus points for spotting a mum and calf).

In the other direction, drive 15 minutes from your shack to St Earth station (or ask Three Mile's friendly reception staff to book a taxi for you) and take a scenic 12-minute train ride along the bay to St Ives. You could drive, but parking in St Ives is notoriously tricky; this way, you can happily investigate the wine list at chic bistro St. Eia, too. The best Cornish ice cream can be found at Moomaid, but do watch the seagulls – they're fast, bold and hungry. Back at your luxury shack, Three Mile can provide everything you need to make your own pizzas, including dough, toppings and a thorough tutorial. It's the ultimate British staycation and one I can't recommend enough.

DO IT: Three Mile Beach (threemilebeach.co.uk) offers three nights in a two-bedroom beach shack, which sleeps four, from £619.

UK adventures

Stay on an island

Says Sarah Maber, news and features director



Stepping off the passenger ferry on to Brownsea Island is like diving into the pages of a Famous Five story. Owned by the National Trust, the 500-acre island is just a 10-minute ferry ride from Poole Quay (£14.50 return), and is a place of picnics and den-making where time slows down.

The island is famously where the Scouting movement was started by Lord Baden-Powell back in 1907, and you can still camp at a lovely wooded site, including in one of 10 pre-erected bell tents or even a tent hung from the trees. There are also four properties to rent, including the newly converted Custom House on the water's edge, which sleeps two.

A big part of the appeal of staying on Brownsea is that you get the island almost to yourself once the visitors go home. That's when the sika deer and red squirrels emerge. The island is a haven for birds, too, with several hides where you might see cormorants, oystercatchers and ringed plovers. There's a lagoon, heathlands and the coastline to explore, as well as a natural play area for children. ♦♦

DO IT: The National Trust (nationaltrust.org.uk/brownsea-island) offers stays at Brownsea Island campsite from £64 (two nights minimum), St Mark's Bothy from £180 a night (two-night minimum) and Custom House from £150 a night (three-night minimum).





Go cycling on Sark

Says Emma Justice, special projects director

The last time I rode a bike, I came dangerously close to cycling into a canal. It was 15 years ago, in Amsterdam, and I've not been on one since. So, when my partner suggested we try cycling around the island of Sark, I was apprehensive to say the least. Luckily this tiny, car-free Channel Island (visitguernsey.com) couldn't be an easier place to enjoy a two-wheeled adventure.

We based ourselves in St Peter Port, Guernsey's picturesque main town, which this year celebrates 80 years since its liberation from German occupation. The coastline is still dotted with WW2 bunkers and their presence on the island forms the basis of *The Guernsey Literary And Potato Peel Pie Society* (a must-read before you go).

When Victor Hugo lived here in exile,

he finished *Les Misérables* in Hauteville House (now a museum; don't miss it) and remarked how: 'Even in rain and fog the arrival in Guernsey is splendid.' Luckily for us, the sun came out as we touched down after a short flight from London.

Sark, the third smallest Channel island, can only be reached by boat (sail with sarkshipping.gg, from £20pp return). You'll need your sea legs because the 30-minute crossing can be choppy. The good news is you might spot bottlenose dolphins playing in the wake or puffins bobbing in the water around Herm, and pulling into Sark's tiny Maseline Harbour is like stepping back in time.

Tractors with trailers known as 'toast racks' take you up the steep hill to the main village (or you can walk up on a pretty wooded path), where you'll find a post office, grocery store and a cute coffee shop serving delicious crab sandwiches. There are no street lights, making Sark the world's first dark-sky island. To get around you walk, cycle or take a horse and carriage ride. We hired our wheels from Avenue Cycles Sark (avenuecyclesark.com, around £8.50 a day). It takes less than an hour to

'Sark can only be reached by boat – look out for dolphins and puffins on the crossing'

explore the whole island, but be warned; it's hilly, so go for an electric bike. We didn't and I regretted it!

The highlight of our adventure was seeing La Coupée, a narrow isthmus of land that connects Big and Little Sark. Park your bike at the headland and sit on one of the benches to take in the unspoilt landscape. It's so stunning that William Turner painted it and Victor Hugo was inspired to write poetry here. It was a view worth getting back in the saddle for.

DO IT: The Old Government House (theoghhotel.com) has double rooms from £280 a night. Aurigny (aurigny.com) flies to Guernsey from eight UK airports from £49.99 one-way.

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES/JOHN MILLAR, THE TRAVEL PROJECT, GREG MACVEAN, DAVID F. COOKE, ANNA PURNA WELDON/NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES

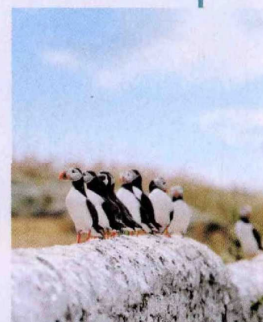
UK adventures

3 OF THE BEST accessible adventures

From gardens to beaches, these make great days out for anyone with limited mobility.

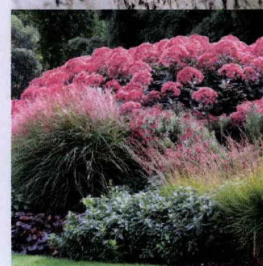
■ GO BIRD-SPOTTING AT NORTH BERWICK EAST BEACH, EAST LoTHIAN

Just a 30-minute train journey from Edinburgh, North Berwick offers views out to the Firth of Forth and the Bass Rock, the world's largest northern gannet colony. You can also see puffins from April to July. Visit the Scottish Seabird Centre (seabird.org), which has a cafe and accessible loo, and borrow a chair from Scottish Beach Wheelchairs (beachwheelchairs.org) so you can enjoy the sand on East Beach, accessible via a ramp.



■ ENJOY A DAY OUT AT THE SAVILL GARDEN, BERKSHIRE

This huge, beautifully considered 35-acre space in Windsor Great Park (windsorgreatpark.co.uk) has smooth, resin-bonded pathways offering good grip and easy gradients – just ensure your wheelchair's battery is fully charged so you get to see it all. Commissioned by George V and created by Eric Savill in 1932, it's delighted nature lovers for decades. The contemporary visitor centre, with its living roof, is a real eye-catcher, as is the Rose Garden, with its spiral walkway allowing you to see the blooms from above.



■ VISIT TRESKO'S SUBTROPICAL GARDENS, ISLES OF ScILLY

Often described as 'Kew without the glass', Tresco (tresco.co.uk/enjoying/abbey-garden), is the second biggest island of the Isles of Scilly and just 28 miles from the Cornish coast. Gardeners will love the huge array of exotic plants from Chile, Mexico, California, South Africa, New Zealand, Australia and the Canary Islands, all planted on the grounds of a former Benedictine Abbey. The shingle paths are wide and easy to navigate, with pleasant gradients and a few mobility scooters available. Look out for the tortured pines, with their branches twisting towards the sea, creating a stunning architectural silhouette. ■

For more accessible days out, visit countryliving.com/uk/access-for-all



Explore Sark by horse and carriage, and visit La Coupé (far left) on two wheels, staying in St Peter Port in Guernsey (below) to see Victor Hugo's Hauteville House (left)

