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THE SUNDAY TIMES
travel
magazine

THE BEST

HOTELS

IN THE WORLD

Not just the best — but our best. Here, for the first time ever, we at *The Sunday Times Travel Magazine* reveal our favourite-ever stays (one from just £42 a night!)



Lime Wood, New Forest

Why we ♥ it: Of the south coast's many luxury hotels, this one balances fabulous food, indulgent spa and rambling countryside best. From the boot room stocked with wellies of all sizes, to having your in-room fireplace lit for you while you're at dinner, it feels like staying with a retired rock star who lets you roam around their pony-grazed estate. Spend the day being massaged with British herbs, then sashay down to dinner at Harbrett Holder & Co, heaping your plate with rustic Italian delights.

Editor's tip: True foodies should check out the cookery classes — you could learn to sculpt ravioli or bone a trout (from £65pp). Doubles from £385, room-only (limewoodhotel.co.uk).

Gurnard's Head, Cornwall

Why we ♥ it: Just a few coastal wiggles away from Land's End, the Gurnard's Head is the kind of cheery-charming pub-with-rooms that others have tried to replicate, but rarely do so well. It's still a proper hostelery with local regulars; the food is superb (red gurnard

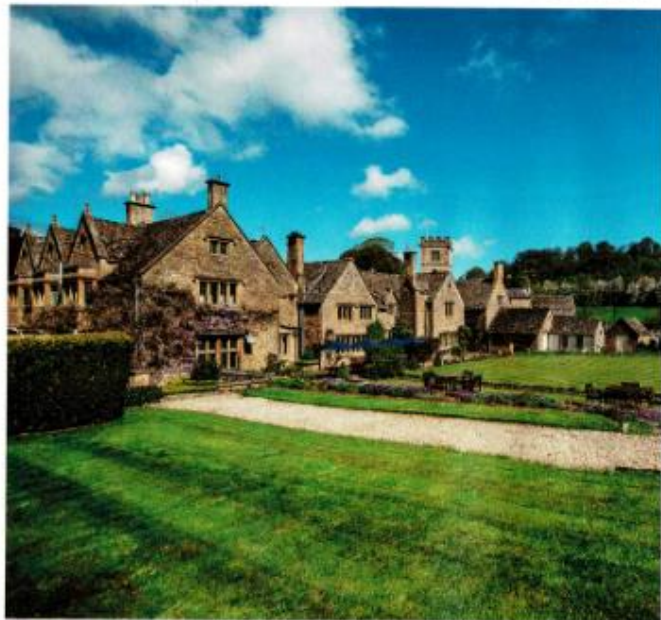
with cuttlefish, or pork collar with black pud and quince); and the Vespene beds are sumptuous, with views of gorse moorland or the wild Atlantic.

Editor's tip: You'll definitely want to eat here, so book one of the pub's Sunday Sleepover offers, which includes Sunday lunch, dinner and breakfast, from £195. Doubles from £125, B&B (gurnardthead.co.uk).

Dunstane House, Edinburgh, Scotland

Why we ♥ it: It wraps up the best of Scottish design, food, warmth and character in one luxury country-house hotel — and it's just 20 minutes' walk from the city centre. After a show-stopping 2017 refurb, it has interiors-mag suites, with freestanding copper tubs, tartan headboards, retro phones and Roberts radios. Base yourself in the main building to ensure a toasty totter from the fire-lit dinner lounge to bed — via a visit to the navy-and-gold bar for walnut-faced Old Fashioneds and distinctly charming barmen.

Country idyll: below, old-fashioned Buckland Manor in the Cotswolds. Opposite, clockwise from top left, the charming pub-with-rooms, Gurnard's Head, Cornwall; the navy-and-gold bar at Dunstane House, Edinburgh; room in the stylish Lime Wood hotel, in the New Forest



Editor's tip: Bring small change. The bus to the city centre stops right outside, but it's £1.70, cash only. Doubles from £154, B&B (thedunstanecol.com).

The Grove, Hertfordshire

Why we ♥ it: Would you think us shallow if one reason we love this country-house hotel (though there are millions) is that we met Tom Cruise there? No? Good! Because it's that kind of place. The Grove is near Warner Bros Studios, as well as the England football team training ground, not to mention home to golf links played by Tiger Woods, which means celeb sightings are par for the course. We also love the soporific Sequoia Spa, with its black mosaic pool (it feels like swimming in the night sky); Colette's for posh eats and the Stables for banging burgers, and the quaint walled garden with kids' club, urban beach and outdoor games.

Editor's tip: Not a lot of people know this, but the Grove has a truly gorgeous outdoor swimming pool. And it's heated. Pack your cozzie, whatever the weather. Doubles from £225, room-only (thegrove.co.uk).

The Cary Arms, Devon

Why we ♥ it: It's an rustic smugglers' nook of an inn, with proper five-star facilities. When you're not sipping a pint of local cider or eating ice creams in the stone-clad pub itself, you're encased in crisp-white, nautical luxury — whether in one of its beach-hut-styled sea-view rooms, or high-glamour cottages just up unspoilt Babbacombe Bay. The new spa is beautifully done, too — glass-fronted, sea-view, scented with marine-themed products, and with fresh whirlpools, steam rooms and tropical-mist showers. By night, the inn turns into a gourmet restaurant, but keeps its local-boozier charm by allowing friendly hounds in and serving classics (fish 'n' chips, sticky-toffee pudding), while a pianist tickles the ivories.

Editor's tip: Party of four or more? The hotel's two- and three-bed cottages are much better value than several hotel rooms (the mansion-like Cove Cottage sleeps six and starts at £525 a night, including a breakfast hamper). Doubles from £245, B&B (caryarms.co.uk).