

SPECIAL
ISSUE

SECTION 6

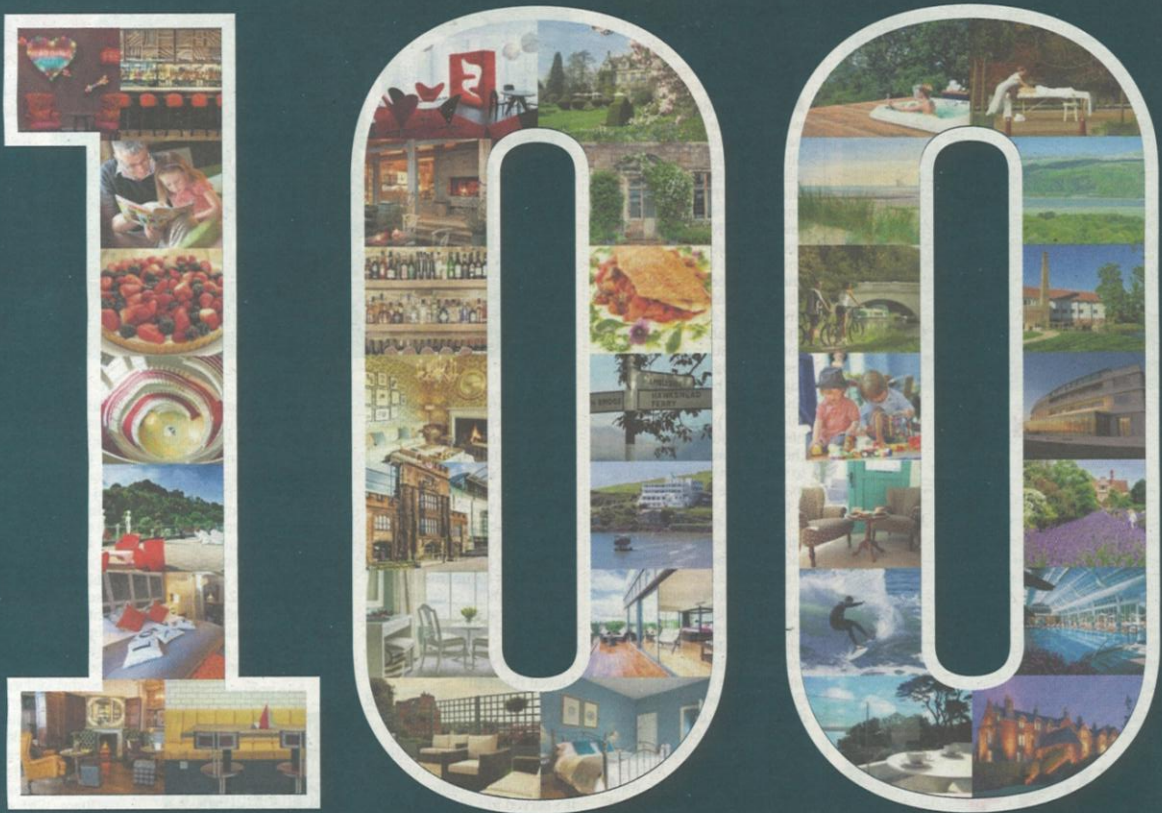
14.09.2014

THE SUNDAY TIMES

TRAVEL

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ULTIMATE



BRITISH HOTELS

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BRITISH HOTELS

FOODIE

EAT, DRINK... AND STAGGER UP TO BED



LEWTRENCHARD MANOR **B**

Devon
At this Jacobean manor near Dartmoor, Matthew Peryer demonstrates a fresh and inventive touch. Try his john dory with "granola" made from quinoa, hazelnut and almond, and the addictive tarragon dust – a perfect accompaniment to a milk sorbet. For a TV dinner with a difference, book the chef's table, where you'll get a feed from four cameras trained on the kitchen. *Doubles from £235, including dinner and breakfast;* lewtrenchard.co.uk

LANGFORD FIVEHEAD **I**

Somerset
Reached down an unmarked wiggly road, this 15th-century restaurant with rooms has seven acres of grounds, six elegant bedrooms with creaky floors, and the winning ingredient: mouthwatering dishes. They are cooked by the lovable manager, Olly Jackson, and served by his wife, Rebecca, as if you're a friend over for dinner. We love the slow-cooked pork belly with gratin dauphinois and vegetables plucked straight from the garden. Ask for the private table in the library. *Doubles from £245, including dinner and breakfast;* langfordfivehead.co.uk

THE GALLIVANT **D**

East Sussex
They serve supper, not dinner, at this modest seaside motel. So, while the chefs have clocked up credentials in Michelin-starred restaurants worldwide, the style is simple and direct. Try Dungeness crab, followed by slow-roast rib of lamb from Romney Marsh. The jaunty rooms have been given a retro-chic make-over, with coat hooks for wardrobes and starfish for adornment. Beautiful Camber Sands beach awaits over the dunes. **+** *Times offer: get 25% off stays. Doubles from £175, half-board; thegallivant hotel.com*



MANDARIN ORIENTAL HYDE PARK **E**

London SW1
Heston Blumenthal went back to the future for Dinner, his restaurant at the Mandarin Oriental, blending historical gastronomy and modern methods. The recipe for the meat fruit starter dates from

the 16th century – it's a chicken liver parfait disguised as a mandarin (left). Desserts include the unmissable tipsy cake, made with spit-roast pineapple. The service is charming and down to earth, while a night in one of the traditional rooms upstairs is a fitting end to a big treat. *Doubles from £329, B&B; three courses from £56; mandarinoriental.com*



LE MANOIR AUX QUAT'SAISONS **F**

Oxfordshire
For 30 years, Raymond Blanc has put heart and soul into this 15th-century manor in Great Milton. There's no sign of his passion abating, so expect treats such as confit of salmon with elderflower, and lamb with artichoke – worth every penny of the eye-watering price tag. The 32 individually designed rooms display the same attention to detail. Don't miss out on the kitchen tour: it's fascinating to see the technology required to create truly haute cuisine. *Doubles from £545, B&B; seven courses from £124; manoir.com*

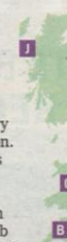
YNYSHIR HALL **G**

Powys
Saved from the collapse of the Von Essen hotel group in 2011, Ynysshir Hall is blossoming. The addition of two sexy garden suites is one sign. Another is the arrival of the chef Gareth Ward, a mountain of a man with a delicate touch. Ynysshir ricotta is one of his classics, a mix of homemade cheese, pickled pineapple, ham and rocket. The minimum order is nine courses – schedule some big walks in the hills beyond. **+** *Times offer: two nights for the price of one. Doubles from £205, B&B; nine courses £72.50; ynyshirhall.co.uk*

LANGAR HALL **I**

Nottinghamshire
Imogen Skirving's family has owned this blush-coloured

country house since 1860, and she can talk you through every architectural detail. She will also be the person taking your food order and purring approvingly should you choose Langar lamb and cumin gnocchi. Cartland – named after the romantic novelist Barbara – is the most stylish of the 12 bedrooms. Downstairs, the designer, knight of the realm and Langar fan Paul Smith has



sprinkled fairy dust across the public rooms. *Doubles from £100, B&B; two courses from £25; langarhall.com*

THE YORKE ARMS **I**

North Yorkshire
Schedule some serious exercise in Nidderdale to pave the way for a guilt-free Michelin-starred meal at this ivy-clad coaching inn. Start with Wensleydale soufflé and sea scallop, followed by fillet of Yorkshire beef with wild mushroom. You can cross the courtyard and stream to check out the kitchen garden and see which side orders to choose. The new courtyard rooms are lighter and fresher, but you won't feel short-changed in a four-poster in the main house. *Doubles from £345 including dinner and breakfast;* yorke-arms.co.uk

THE THREE CHIMNEYS **I**

Highlands
Marooned on the shores of Loch Dunvegan, at the western edge of Skye, this former crofter's cottage has a wild, windswept end-of-the-worldness it would be impossible not to love. Just as well, because it's not cheap – hence the decidedly well-heeled crowd from Edinburgh and Glasgow. What attracts them is the three-AA red rosette food: every morsel of local crab, lobster, scallop and lamb is a joyous journey round Skye's glens, bays and bountiful coastline. *Doubles from £345, B&B; eight courses £90;* threechimneys.co.uk

OUR
WINNER

NO 131 **A**

Cheltenham NEW OPENING
It's a case of fun rather than fine dining at No 131: the upstairs restaurant in this grade II listed villa has dainty tables, weighty chandeliers and glimpses of the tree-lined Imperial Gardens through the sash windows. The focus is on British prime cuts, such as Welsh wagyu sirloin and red ruby Devon T-bone, but there's roast chicken and sea bass to share, too. Downstairs, Crazy Eights has the vibe of a gentlemen's club, with suggestive photography and a billiards room. Tuck into oysters at the swanky zinc bar or work your way through pungent portions from Neal's Yard Dairy in the wood-paneled cheese-tasting room. Bedrooms are upcycled, upmarket and loaded with snacking salamis and posh pork crackling. There's a flask of hot milk with chocolate stirrers for bedtime, and a pre-breakfast tray of croissants and juice is left outside your door in the morning. *Doubles from £150, B&B; three courses from £25; no131.com*

£137 Average hotel price in London SOURCE: HOTEL PRICE INDEX

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