


TRAVEL



ULTIMATE NEW ZEALAND

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It's the simple formula for a delicious weekend away. **Alessia Horwich** serves up a tasting menu of great British restaurants with rooms

Dinner. Bed. Breakfast.

1 THE AIRDS HOTEL
ARGYLL AND BUTE
This former ferry inn at Port Appin, just north of Eriska, has log fires, sitting rooms with big sofas, smart designer fabrics and a croquet lawn out the back. So the style's classic country house, but the surrounding scenery is considerably more dramatic than the usual rolling hills, with the Morvern Mountains rearing up over Loch Linnhe. The food's epic, too — immaculate plates groaning with seafood pulled out of the water just two minutes from the kitchen door. Start with steamed lemon sole with saffron potatoes, sea vegetables and oyster emulsion, and finish with the banana soufflé with passion fruit ice cream. Three courses £55; doubles from £305, half-board; airds-hotel.com

2 THE COTTAGE IN THE WOOD
CUMBRIA
You can spot red squirrels in the kitchen garden of this cosy restaurant with rooms in the mountain forest of Whinlatter — and cooks. They're forever shimmying back and forth for their homegrown ingredients. After kippers at breakfast, it's on to chunky carrot cake for your afternoon tea by the fire, then a dinner that might feature potato and hazelnut gnocchi with sprouting broccoli and cep velouté. Between meals, yomp your way up the Whinlatter Fell, which you can see from the semicircular conservatory dining room. Three courses £50; doubles from £110; sawdays.co.uk

3 NORTHCOTE
LANCASHIRE
Nigel Haworth's Lonk lamb Lancashire hotpot is worth crossing continents for — or take junction 31 of the M6 and drive 15 minutes into the Ribbles Valley. That's where you'll find Northcote, a modern country hotel with manicured gardens, home to his Michelin-starred restaurant



and only 10 minutes from the Forest of Bowland. The ultra-contemporary decor might be too much for some — after a glass of wine to match each course, and that hotpot, you won't care. Mains from £35; doubles from £260, B&B; prideofbritainhotels.com

4 YNYSHIR HALL
POWYS
This 10-bedroom hotel is surrounded by the Cambrian Mountains and near the Ynys-hir RSPB nature reserve. Its remote countryside location means the skies are ripe for serious stargazing — ask for one of the house telescopes to be placed in your room. Gorge on playful dishes such as Not French Onion Soup, a Japanese-style broth with umami, miso-seasoned onions, tofu, shallots and dashi, in the Michelin-starred restaurant. The place was once owned by Queen Victoria, but while some of the rooms are a 19th-century fanfare of chintz and bold colours, others are cool and contemporary. Five courses £55; doubles from £195, B&B; ynyshirhall.co.uk

5 TYDDYN LLAN
DENBIGHSHIRE
A Georgian manor house on the edge of Snowdonia, Tyddyn Llan is everything a Michelin-starred restaurant with rooms should be, without any foodie fussing. Expect proper-sized portions of wild bass with laverbread *beurre blanc*, relaxed service and excellent, reasonably priced wines — it's £30pp for a wine pairing of five small glasses. Rooms are simple but chic. Make sure you're back from your walk in time for prosecco and canapés by the fire before dinner. Three courses £60; doubles from £290, half-board; tyddynllan.co.uk



6 TITCHWELL MANOR
NORFOLK
A short stroll from Titchwell Manor, you'll find Holme Beach, one of the most beautiful on the Norfolk coast. Its emptiness contrasts with this Victorian farmhouse, where the interiors are funky enough for the London hipsters who make the trip up for a weekend of seal-spotting and nature walks. The restaurant, run by Eric Snaith, is tipped to win a Michelin star, and dishes such as trout with cauliflower, sherry vinegar, almond and brown butter show why. Come in summer, when he also does a pop-up fish-and-chip van in the garden. Mains from £18; doubles from £185, half-board; titchwellmanor.com

7 TUDOR FARMHOUSE
GLOUCESTERSHIRE
At this boutique retreat on a farm in Clearwell, a village in the Forest of Dean, the livestock and sprawling kitchen garden provide almost all the ingredients for dishes such as duck breast with smoked bacon, spiced honey, quince and red cabbage purée on the "20-mile menu". Its own 14 acres are a place to get out in the fresh air and get muddy. The rooms have heavy wood beams, plush wool blankets, Nespresso coffee machines and freestanding baths. Mains from £16; doubles from £145, B&B; tudorfarmhousehotel.co.uk

8 THE KINGHAM PLOUGH
OXFORDSHIRE
You need to arrive before lunchtime at this rustic pub in a small Cotswold village, so you can eat there twice. First, attack the fine-dining menu, maybe opting for lamb wellington with braised black cabbage and carrot and swede mash. For supper, the bar menu features an excellent house burger with a bronzed brioche bun. It's a short stagger upstairs to the smart rooms, with three-pillow-wide beds and freestanding baths. The feast continues in the morning: hot drop scones are served before your breakfast main course. Mains from £15; doubles from £145, B&B; thekinghamplough.co.uk

9 THE WELLINGTON ARMS
HAMPSHIRE
This eco country pub with four lavish rooms in Baughurst, on the Berkshire



It's all taken care of Sundowners at the Beach at Bude. Below left, Eric Snaith at Titchwell Manor; a room at the Wellington Arms; and a Snaith creation

17.04.2016 / 9



border, is all about simple, slow food and leisurely eating. You could skip off to visit nearby Highclere Castle – that's Downton Abbey – or the Bombay Sapphire gin distillery, but you'll probably just set up camp under parasols in the garden and linger over dishes made using ingredients from the pub's own polytunnel. We like the red wine, roe deer and root vegetable pie. In your room, you'll find Aesop products, Hungarian goose-down pillows, huge beds and homemade biscuits.

Mains from £14; doubles from £100, B&B; chicretreats.com

10 THE DOG & BADGER

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
Getting a room at the Hand and Flowers, Tom Kerridge's two-Michelin-starred pub in Marlow, is a nightmare. Luckily, six minutes down the road in Medmenham, this riverside grade II listed 14th-century ale house has just added six plush rooms. Book in advance for the cheaper set-lunch menu at the H&F (much easier than getting an evening reservation). For dinner, back to the Dog & Badger, to try gurnard with Trealy Farm chorizo and butter beans, cooked by Bola Akinbobola, who worked as a sous-chef at Racine, in Knightsbridge. The wine list has been put together by Oscar Malek, a former director of wine at the posh country hotels Chewton Glen and Cliveden.

Mains from £12; rooms open in May, doubles from £175, B&B; thedogandbadger.com

11 THE FLITCH OF BACON

ESSEX
Daniel Clifford has two Michelin stars at Midsummer House, in Cambridge, but what he didn't have was a pub to go to for a relaxing pint. So he's just opened

Above, from top left: medium rare at Crab & Lobster; bath time at Tudor Farmhouse; bar snacks at the Kingham Plough; by the fire at Titchwell Manor; and the gardens at Tudor Farmhouse. Right, dessert at the Driftwood Hotel. Below, the bar at the Dog & Badger

his own, a boozer with slouchy leather chairs, a log fire and local ales on tap in the 14th-century village of Little Dunmow. That said, posh, pretty plates such as ribeye with smoked bone marrow bearnaise speed out from the pass as they would in a fine-dining establishment. Upstairs, the three boutique rooms have four-posters, claw-foot baths and imaginative touches such as Penguin book-cover wallpaper.

Mains from £14; doubles from £160, B&B; flitchofbacon.co.uk

12 DRIFTWOOD HOTEL

CORNWALL
Make an early dinner reservation in the Michelin-starred dining room at the

Driftwood, just north of Porthcatho, on the Roseland Peninsula. The evening sun floods in through the huge windows and makes the space, including the kitschy seaside ornaments, glow. It's not as pretty as the food, though. Strewn with edible flowers and vibrant garnishes, Chris Eden's excellent dishes – such as lamb loin and crisp belly with turnip, aubergine, olive, pine nuts, rosemary and feta – are perfectly presented. If there is a hull in conversation, you can gawp at the superb sea views, then slink up to your chic nautical-themed room.

Three courses £60; doubles from £210, B&B; driftwoodhotel.co.uk

13 THE BEACH AT BUDE

CORNWALL
This is no tumbledown beach shack. Wander up to the top of Bude's long Summerleaze Beach and you'll find a chic boutique hotel with 16 rooms that wouldn't look out of place by the seaside in New England. The staff are smiley and efficient, and it has a cracking little seafood restaurant: the chef, Joe Simmonds, was trained at the Michelin-starred Bath Priory. He whips up elegant plates of hake with razor clams, and seafood and leek cannelloni, in the bright dining room, after which you should flop onto the

curvy leather chairs in the bar and work your way through the selection of Cornish gins.

Mains from £16; doubles from £120, B&B; thebeachatbude.co.uk

14 CRAB & LOBSTER

WEST SUSSEX
This whitewashed inn has been here for more than 350 years, and overlooks the Pagham Harbour RSPB nature reserve. Book in for remarkable birdwatching, views of bucolic countryside and six bright rooms with clean pastels, neat bathrooms and Noble Isle toiletries. The restaurant has open fires, flagstone floors, excellent local wines and a gastropubby menu dominated by seafood classics such as halibut with samphire and lobster bisque. In summer, the best seat is in the sun on the terrace at the back, with a glass of local Tinwood pink fizz in hand.

Mains from £16.50; doubles from £165, B&B; crab-lobster.co.uk

15 THE GALLIVANT

EAST SUSSEX
Combine a British restaurant with a Californian beachside motel and you've got the Gallivant.

The long, low building sits behind the dunes at Camber. After an afternoon amble along the sand, tuck into Romney salt-marsh lamb ramp with pearl barley and lamb consomme, followed by drinks in front of the woodburner in the lounge, on chairs covered with sheepskin blankets. If a good night's rest in the recently refurbished rooms doesn't ease the hangover, the bloody mary recovery station at breakfast will.

Mains from £16.50; doubles from £95, B&B; thegallivant.co.uk

