



WHY FISHMORE IS A REAL CATCH

Fishmore Hall and Spa, Ludlow, Shropshire

WHAT'S IT LIKE? De-stress in this boutique Georgian country house hotel, surrounded by pretty valleys and rolling fields. The picturesque semi-rural setting makes it perfect for romantic breaks or city escapes. Despite its traditional exterior, the hotel itself is bang up-to-date and offers a cosy, elegant vibe in keeping with its period charm. The staff are all incredibly friendly – and even pooches get a warm welcome.

ROOMS ANY GOOD? The 15 modern bedrooms range in size and are all individually decorated. Comfortable and stylish, there are decadent king-size beds and Elemis toiletries. Plus there is free water in the mini-bar and homemade biscuits. Some rooms have freestanding baths and all make the most of the beautiful views. Expect to sleep like a log.

WHAT ELSE? Switch off or get active – you're spoilt for choice. Explore the local countryside on foot or bicycle, visit nearby historical attractions or try your hand at countryside pursuits such as fishing and horse-riding. If you prefer to stay put, be sure to make the most of the small but perfectly formed Nordic-style spa. We enjoyed a relaxing massage before unwinding in the outdoor hot tub and enjoying views of the Shropshire Hills. Happy days.

EAT HERE OR GRAB A PIZZA? With Michelin foodie mecca Ludlow just minutes away, the culinary standards in this area are extremely high – so prepare to tuck in! The six-course tasting menu we had in the hotel's fine dining restaurant, Forelles, was a real highlight.

SO YOU'D GO BACK? Absolutely. The hotel was perfect for a nice and relaxing short stay.

WHAT'S THE DAMAGE? Double rooms start from £123 per night. See fishmorehall.co.uk or call 01584 875148.

DULCIE PEARCE

CROATIA IS KING FOR SET-JETTERS

HIT TV show Game of Thrones and a host of new Hollywood films are making Croatia a hot destination for set-jetters – holiday-makers who visit filming locations.

"Thronecr", or Game of Thrones fans, have been flocking to the Mediterranean hotspot thanks to a number of guided tours in destinations such as Dubrovnik – the setting for King's Landing and the Battle of Blackwater Bay in the TV series.

Now, having provided the backdrop for a whole host of upcoming Hollywood movies, Croatia is promoting its film locations at the three-day World Travel Market, which kicks off in East London on Monday.

This December sees the release of Star Wars: The Last Jedi, which was partly filmed in Dubrovnik. And earlier this year, Mamma Mia! sequel Here We Go Again started filming on the remote Croatian island of Vis – a controversial decision given the original film was set in Greece and filmed on the islands of Skiathos and Skopelos.

And Robin Hood: Origins saw Dubrovnik's city walls and Posat harbour double as the Nottinghamshire hero's home when it began filming in February.

The movie, starring Jamie Foxx, *inset*, has been described as "the most ambitious Hollywood project produced in Croatia". Meanwhile, Daniel Craig is about to head to the sun-soaked country to film the 25th Bond movie, which has the working title of Shatterhand.

Ivona Grgan, director of the Croatian National Tourist Office, said: "We're seeing demand among fans who want to visit Croatia to see where their favourite movies and TV shows were filmed."



THE PLACE TO MORO-GGO

WANT an exotic winter getaway that will not break the bank? From November 2018, Thomas Cook will operate twice-weekly flights from Manchester to Marrakech in Morocco, which averages 15C in winter.

Explore the spice markets, local food stalls, vibrant city life and stunning Atlas mountains. The travel agent is offering flight-only options as well as packages to six hotels, including the 4★ Kenzi Menara Palace, near the Unesco market square in the old town.

Thomas Cook's Chris Mothershead said: "The balmy temperature and short flight will attract families looking for a sun getaway closer to home."

Thomas Cook has seven nights at the Kenzi Menara Palace, departing Manchester in November 2018, from £689pp, based on two adults sharing. See thomascook.com or call 0844 412 5970.



hot spot IT'S a dreamy 22C in Cyprus – seven nights' all-inclusive at the 4★ Panareti Coral Bay Hotel costs from £249 per person, including flights departing Standed on November 19. See onthebeach.co.uk for more information or call 0871 474 3000.

TERM-TIME TRIPS 'A TOUGHER TEST'

A DAD'S failed court case over taking his daughter to Disney World Florida in term time has made it harder for other parents to follow suit.

Research by World Travel Market shows 56 per cent of British holidaymakers think they now face a bigger battle to persuade school heads to let them take their children on holiday during term time.

One in five thought the case would not make any difference, while one in four were unsure.

If they do not get permission, 51 per cent of parents would pay the £60 penalty to benefit from cheaper prices outside the traditional school holidays.

Almost a third (31 per cent) said they would not do so, while 18 per cent were not sure.

Jon Platt, from the Isle of Wight, fought the two-year legal case after refusing to pay a £60 fine for taking his daughter on holiday for a week during school time in April 2015.

The dad-of-three took his case to the Supreme Court but lost.

Paul Nelson, of WTM London, said: "Demand and supply dictates that travel costs go up during peak times and families will pay more during traditional school holidays."

"Some parents find it difficult to take time off outside of term time because of pressure on work rotas."

"A holiday provides a rare opportunity for families to spend quality time together."

"It would be a shame if some miss out because of money issues or being unable to take annual leave during school breaks."

hot spot IT'S 23C in LANZA-ROTE – seven nights' self-catering at the three-bedroom Villas Brisa in Playa Blanca is from £289 per person, based on six sharing. Includes car hire and flights from Birmingham on November 16. See jetzholidays.com or call 0800 408 5594.



NEW ALNWICK HOTEL IS BEST BAR NUN

IF the nuns of Northumbria could see me now, I doubt they would approve.

I am sprawled on a bed so large it should have its own post code. A vintage film location lamp on a wooden tripod bathes me, my glass of Chablis and my suite in a sexy, noir-ish light.

The Cookie Jar boutique hotel in Alnwick was once the Convent of Mercy and has its stained-glass windows still in place. The altar has become a huge walk-in shower and the pews are now comfy sofas. In place of the collection plate is a huge jar of homemade cookies.

Sunset is bleeding the sky hues of crimson and gold as Northumbria's prettiest towns. The region certainly needs hotels to match its wild, rugged scenery.

After my baptism – sorry, my shower – I head out to explore Alnwick, one of England's most northerly towns. It is an ancient market hub, amazingly accessible directly from London on Virgin's East Coast Line.

(Trains from King's Cross run direct to Alnmouth, four miles from Alnwick.)

With a castle that's still home to the Duke of Northumberland, this unshowy cobbled town has quirky charm galore.

Barter Books is a vast second-hand bookstore with a model railway running above the shelves.

Meanwhile, superlative suppers are wrapped up for ravenous locals at Jobson's Fish & Chips, while gentlemen's apparel and accessories, from hip flasks to overcoats, are available at Bell & Sons.

That sort of kit is high in demand, as this region is home to some of the best hunting, shooting and fishing in the country. The Cookie Jar has five kennels in its garden for those bringing gun dogs and a secure gunroom for visitors who want to take to the moors for hunting grouse, partridge or pheasant.

Not that the hotel has gone too far down the blokey "tweed and Talisker" route. This was a convent for 120 years, after all.

Debbie Cook opened the 11-room hideaway just off the main shopping street in September.

She has created soft warming bedrooms and a dining area filled with Sixties-era Penguin Classics on the bookshelves.

There is framed vintage cutlery, wingback chairs and a "small plates" menu offering black pudding with pakora – plus a huge range of local cheeses.

I stroll back to The Cookie Jar after a dinner of kippers from nearby Craster at the cosy Market Tavern pub.

(The hotel will serve evening meals from next spring.) On the way, I fall into conversation with two locals clutching fishing rods as they set out of their Land Rover.

When I ask one about his fishing success, he replies: "I did better than I thought I would. This is God's own country, up here. Fishing is one thing. That's the thing about Northumbria. We know we're special but we don't show off about it."

ROB CROSSAN

GO: ALNWICK

GETTING THERE: Virgin Trains East Coast run trains to Alnmouth (eight at Alnmouth) direct from London, York, Newcastle and Edinburgh among other destinations. Return fares from £75 return. Go to virgintraineastcoast.co.uk.

STAYING THERE: The Cookie Jar has rooms from £120 per night including breakfast. See cookiejaralnwick.com.



Teneriff

ROCK and roll has never been so luxurious.

With the newly opened Hard Rock Hotel, Tenerife is the place to go for music lovers who want to soak up the sun long after the British summer has disappeared.

The resort ensures your trip is the perfect balance of tranquillity and rock-and-roll mayhem.

With restaurants and hotels across the world, the Hard Rock brand has cemented its reputation as the No1 destination for music fans and its Tenerife offering is no different, with an endless stream of A-list memorabilia. On entering the lobby, you're confronted by one of Elton John's outrageous stage costumes.

Beyond that, there's a love letter handwritten by a 12-year-old Katy Perry and a diary entry from Madonna while on the brink of superstardom in the Eighties.

You could spend hours just exploring the corridors, spotting a different icon wherever you go.

Michael Jackson's bathrobe sits alongside Elvis Presley's tracksuit at the hotel

GO:TENERIFE

GETTING THERE: Norwegian flies Gatwick to Tenerife from £40 one-way. See norwegian.com/uk or call 0330 828 0854.

STAYING THERE: Hard Rock Hotel rooms are from £186 per night B&B. See hrhtenerife.com.

OUT & ABOUT: Attraction Tickets Direct offers excursions including Sunset & Stars on Mount Teide from £108 per adult and £72 per child and the Max Cat Catamaran trip from £31 per adult and £15 per child. Call 0800 086 1135 or see attraction-tickets-direct.co.uk.

spa and Beyonce's bra was next to my bedroom. Inspired, I decided to embrace my inner rock god and hire a Fender guitar from concierge so I could turn the hotel room into my very own stadium.

All the equipment is provided in exchange for a deposit so you can rock out to your heart's content.

The hotel's 624 rooms and 259 suites are spread across two towers, appropriately named Oasis and Nirvana. Rooms are generous in size with even the standard

deluxe featuring a furnished balcony or terrace, rainfall showers, huge TV and iPod docking station as well as minibar. Upgrade to a gold or platinum room and you are guaranteed a sea view. And if you really fancy splashing out, check into one of the Rock Royalty rooms or suites on the 13th, 14th and 15th floors with access to a free lounge.

There you can indulge in breakfast, drinks, snacks and wines from 7am to 10pm as well as a host of other VIP treats including exclusive reserved areas by the Nirvana pool and a dedicated concierge service.

For best value, book a half-board package, as the hotel is in quite an undeveloped part of the island which has little in the way of food options.

But the Hard Rock's six restaurants will keep you satisfied for your stay, with each offering top-notch global cuisine.

Narumi promises dinner AND a show as the talented chefs cook up a storm with Japanese teppanyaki-style fare in front of your table. Alioli is great for tapas and the mojo potatoes, a Canary Island speciality, are a must-have. While small pota-

toes in a chilli and garlic sauce might not sound revolutionary, you'll find yourself ordering extra portions.

There's also a relaxed beach club, high-end buffet and steakhouse as well as Tex-Mex food at the 3rd Half sports bar. Prices aren't cheap so if you don't opt for half-board, check out the set menus at each restaurant.

After dinner, make sure you visit The 16th, a rooftop bar providing an unbeatable view across the island. It's decked out with comfy seating and an extensive drinks list – and the hours are sure to fly past as you soak in the view.

As you'd expect, the music pumps until the early hours and there is a visit to the Rock Spa was in order. For a small fee, guests can enjoy a massage, unwind in the Jacuzzi or simply sweat it out in the steam room.

For those seeking adventure or wanting to explore the island, Attraction Tickets Direct are the people to call. In keeping with our rock-star theme, we opted for the Sunset & Stars trip and enjoyed a glass of champers atop Spain's highest peak, Mount Teide. You'll take the cable car to the summit while a guide shares his in-depth knowledge of the jaw-dropping surroundings. It includes a tapas-style dinner with wine, and as the tour comes to a close, you can gaze out at distant constellations and planets using long-range telescopes.

On a clear night, you can see as far as Saturn, Jupiter and its moons, or gaze at the craters of our own moon.

Booking ahead with Attraction Tickets Direct



STAR ATTRACTION... Katy, Elvis and Madonna

SPLASH OUT... live like a rock star at the Hard Rock Hotel with its huge pool and swim-up bar. From left, Jon hires guitar, slides at Siam Park and suite



ensures you don't miss out as the tour only runs on specific dates.

If heights aren't your thing, put your sea legs to use on a catamaran day trip. The four-hour sail takes you along the coast of the island to a marine reserve, ideal for swimming, snorkelling or just more sunbathing on the deck.

But keep your eyes peeled for the 28 species of whale and dolphin that can be found en route. It can be a case of blink and you'll miss it, but we managed to spot dozens of dolphins riding the waves while enjoying a sangria or three.

The water fun continues at the Thai-inspired Siam Park, with 30 rides and flumes as well as a white-sand beach, wave pool and lazy river that winds past tanks of tropical fish and through waterfalls. The park can get very busy so beat the queues with a reasonably priced fast-pass ticket that includes unlimited food and drink. It's a no-brainer.

With just a four-hour flight time, a long weekend in Tenerife is the perfect excuse to extend your summer with a rock-and-roll adventure.

JON HORNBUCKLE

