

Travel

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'Walks ended with a glass of Tassie pinot noir and a platter of local cheeses'

Cara Waters tries a new hike with perks in Tasmania

MARK PINDER

2 The Raft at Chigborough, Essex

Top UK breaks



30 hip huts and cool cabins

A riverside bothy, a contemporary treehouse and a swish shepherd's hut, **Jeremy Lazell** has the best escapes to plan ahead

**All prices for stays from April onwards*

1 Juneberry Cornwall

This is a gloriously gothic new offering from the clickbait cabin specialists Unique Homestays. Two miles from the surf and sand at Holywell Bay, the wool-insulated timber hut is styled in deep, dark teals and vintage floral fabrics, with upcycled cabinets and exposed copper piping adding a rough-luxe vibe. There is a bathtub for two, yoga mats for sun salutations on the south-facing deck and a fire pit with far-reaching views. A chef or masseur can be arranged on request.

Details Three nights' self-catering for two from £725; dogs welcome (uniquehomestays.com)

2 The Raft at Chigborough Essex

When only a floating cabin with its own rowing boat will do, this solar-powered two-storey escape bobs on its own private lake just back from the mudflats and marshes of the Blackwater estuary, near Heybridge. The larch-and-pine cabin has floor-to-ceiling windows in the bedrooms and lounge, and a wraparound balcony with a dining table and hammock. Row to a second floating platform with a wood-fired hot tub, or to a barbecue and fire pit on the shore.

3



Sky Den, Northumberland

Details Two nights' self-catering for four from £530 (chigborough-farm.co.uk)

3 Sky Den Northumberland

"Part treehouse, part art installation" is how George Clarke of the TV show *George Clarke's Amazing Spaces* described his extraordinary co-creation in Kielder Water and Forest Park. It's booked until the end of the year, but with an A-frame roof that opens to reveal the Northumberland dark skies, it will be worth the wait. Clarke has cleverly maximised space with fold-away ▶

furniture and a deck that all but touches the branches; an outdoor adventure centre a short walk away offers watersports, climbing, zip-lining and bushcraft.

4 River Dart Cabin Devon

Get way off grid at this repurposed wooden fisherman's hut on the banks of the River Dart near Totnes. Opening this April, the cabin sits half a mile from



8 Hinterlandes Cabin, Cumbria

the nearest neighbour on the Dartington estate, with a 12,000-acre deer park and landscaped garden on its doorstep. Pamperholics look away now: water is from an outside pump, cooking is on a camping stove in a basic kitchen shed and the nearest hot shower is on the campsite one mile away. But, blimey, it's romantic, with a mezzanine bed under low roof beams, a wood-burner and a fire pit overlooking the river.

5 Boulder Field Cabin Derbyshire

It's only 10ft by 10ft with a separate composting loo and you'll have to walk 270 yards up a steep path to get here, but wow. Built last summer at the edge of a giant boulder field in the Peak District National Park, this remarkable hilltop timber-and-glass box opens on to a raised deck with mighty views over forest and dale. You have a wood-fired cedar hot tub on a lower deck, an outdoor kitchen and a Flintstones-style outside shower fixed to ancient limestone slabs. Rowtor Rocks caves are only about a five-minute walk away.

6 Cabin in Piggy Woods Somerset

Close your eyes and picture the grandmother's house in *Little Red Riding Hood* — that's what it looks like. Hand-built by the owner, Woody, during lockdown last year, this is a gnarled and knotted wooden cabin in an oak forest 30 minutes' walk from the pub in Buckhorn Weston. Not that it's basic; deep leather armchairs sit on Persian rugs in front of an open fire, there's electric lighting and even wi-fi and a proper kitchen, bathroom and shower. A ladder in the lounge leads up to a super-kingsize mezzanine bed.

7 Dabinett Treehouse Somerset

This booked up fast when it opened last summer — with good reason. Teetering on stilts at the edge of a Mendips forest, this is an ultra-modern treehouse for two with a wood-burning stove and monsoon shower. A burnt-orange velvet sofa, fairy lights and bold fabrics add flair. The cosy barrel-roofed treehouse is wall-to-wall glass at its front end, opening on to a terrace with uninterrupted views over the Somerset Levels. Recline in the wooden bathtub between two trunks on a second raised platform or over pints down the lane at the Pheasant Inn.

8 Hinterlandes Cabin Cumbria

This lockdown project, opened in December, is moved every month to a different Lake District location. At present in a secret woodland site near Crummock Water, the off-grid, solar-powered larch-clad cabin has a minimalist wool-insulated ash interior, a cosy bedroom and, below the large panoramic window, a seat that converts into a second bed. An outside wood-fired hot tub beckons after yomps on the fell. Its owner and builder, John Graham, also offers stays in a converted American Community bus, and a fell-top cabin that will open as soon as lockdown lifts.



5 Boulder Field Cabin, Derbyshire

Details Two nights' self-catering for four from £310 (hinterlandes.com)

9 Littledown Dorset

The owner of this funky A-frame cabin used to work in fashion — it shows. Fabrics and kitchenware namecheck design brands from Pooky to Matilda Goad, with Moroccan tiles round the wood-burner and an Oliver Bonas cocktail shaker (and honesty bar). Five minutes' walk from the Fox Inn, near Ansty, the cabin is on a 400-acre arable farm with a tennis court, an outdoor bathtub and views from a full-height window across a swimming lake and rolling Dorset Downs. Lakeside yoga can be arranged on request. It opened only last month — book now before word gets out.

10 Bob's Lodge Warwickshire

Decor at this two-level Cotswolds cabin is a so-so blend of piney palettes and laminate flooring, but you're not here for the style points. You're here for the wide timber terrace, which has a geodesic dome (a fourth bedroom), a seven-seater hot tub and a slide whizzing down to a wide lawn. The cabin lies half a mile up a drive on a working cattle and sheep farm near Stratford-upon-Avon, has friendly alpacas and ponies in the

surrounding fields and shares a trampoline and play park with four more cabins.

Details Two nights' self-catering for eight from £770 (winchcombefarm.co.uk)

11 Lake Cabin Hampshire

It's not the only lakeside cabin on our list, but it is the only one with a spa, indoor pool and Angela Hartnett restaurant two minutes' slipper shuffle from the front door. In the grounds of the five-star Lime Wood hotel in the New Forest, this sedum-roofed cabin is cantilevered out over a small lake, with watery views through sliding glass doors. Rustic stripped timber floors and walls are married with a funky emerald crushed-velvet sofa and art deco tiles. A silver bathtub and wood-burning stove sit on a terrace perched over the water.

12 The Shack Isle of Wight

If you're after a classic 1950s-feel seaside break, check out this old-school two-bedroom beach hut. The cedar-shingle shack is just steps from the sands at Gurnard and has views across the Solent from the terrace (featuring hammock,

chiminea and barbecue). Inside, the vibe is kiss-me-quick summer hols, with candyfloss-pink Formica in the galley kitchen, vintage armchairs and solar-powered lanterns. In the tiny lounge, a wood-burning stove with unlimited firewood is just the job after a bracing sea dip.

13 The Ferry Waiting Room Stirlingshire

This brilliantly bonkers Trossachs outpost started life as the waiting room for the Port Appin ferry terminal. Salvaged from scrap and rehomed at Monachyle Mhor boutique hotel, the Ferry Waiting Room now lords it over a wildly secluded loch four miles up the narrow glen from Rob Roy's grave. Deerskins and colourful Moroccan throws add urban cool, while the bed stares towards a wall of glowering granite summits. The kitchen is in a separate timber bothy, but the hotel's good food is hard to beat after Munro-bagging in the heathery glen behind.

14 Sandy Toes Kent

Ever wandered Shellness Beach on the Isle of Sheppey and wished you could

Travel restrictions are in place; check gov.uk for further details



9 Littledown, Dorset



13 The Ferry Waiting Room, Stirlingshire

rent the rickety wooden beach shack just back from the waves? Now you can. Available to rent since August, Sandy Toes is a solar-powered fisherman's cottage given a stylish facelift by its film-maker/production designer owners, who have littered it with upcycled handpainted furniture. There is a wide dining terrace all but splashed by surf, plus buckets, spades, frisbees and board games as well as fish and chips and penny arcades 20 minutes' walk up the beach in Leysdown.

Details Three nights' self-catering for five from £855; dogs welcome (canopyandstars.co.uk)

15 Sunrise Tree House Norfolk

Half an hour inland from a string of north Norfolk beaches including Holkham and Holme, Sunrise is the biggest of six Tarzan-meets-Kevin McCloud treehouses in the wooded 22-acre grounds of West Lexham Manor, near King's Lynn. A large deck overlooks a lake that cries out for bracing pre-breakfast dips and shots on the on-site rowing boat. Meanwhile, a gnarled ash sparkling with fairy lights reaches up through the open-plan living area, which has gypsy-chic quilts and stained-glass windows. There are a couple of hobs, but proper meals are best had at the fork-to-farm café on site.

Details Two nights' accommodation only for six from £400; dogs welcome (westlexham.org)

16 The Hudnalls Hideout Gloucestershire

There are no children allowed at this sleek Scandi treehouse for two, built last year in a private wooded fold of the Wye Valley close to St Briavels. Reached only on foot via a forest track with luggage transported by wheelbarrow, the two-storey treehouse has underfloor heating, a suspended bioethanol fireplace and a wraparound terrace with a copper bathtub for two. A hand-carved staircase built into a cedar trunk leads to a cosy loft bedroom with treetop views.

Details Two nights' self-catering for two from £500 (hudnallshideout.co.uk)

17 The Rook's Nook Herefordshire

This is the cutest of three pine-clad treehouses dotted about the Rookery Woods, a four-and-a-half acre forest that was won at auction in the local pub. Opened last summer, the spacious open-plan treehouse was built around the trunk of an aged ash by the owner, Dale Badman. He crafted beds and furniture using timber milled from the

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wood. There is an excellent modern kitchen, a raised dining terrace looking across the fields towards Shropshire, and footpaths on to the Bromyard Downs.

Details Two nights' self-catering for two from £380 (therookerywoods.uk)

18 Uisge Argyll and Bute

Clad in striking rust-red steel, this contemporary take on a traditional Highland bothy sits by a lonely lochan near Oban on a 1,200-acre hill farm littered with Neolithic ruins. Uisge, which opened last summer, is reached by the owner's boat or after a 20-minute walk from where you leave the car. It's off grid, but far from basic: ash trees from Loch Awe have become a beautiful table and bench; stoneware is by Argyll Pottery; sheepskins are from Skye. You also have a paddleboard and kayak, fishing rods and farm-to-bothy breakfast hampers.

Details Two nights' B&B for two from £300 (inverlonan.com)

19 The Lodge Cumbria

Wyoming meets the northern Lake District at this hand-built Eden Valley ranch house, inspired by the Edenhall Estate owner's travels through the Rockies. Right on the banks of the River Eamont on a dizzyingly remote corner of the 1,500-acre estate, this is a proper, pioneer-chic log cabin with exposed larch trunks for walls and a mezzanine third bedroom above the stove-warmed lounge. It even has a creaky covered porch, perfect for watching kingfishers zip along the river.

Details Three nights' self-catering for six from £1,392; dogs welcome (edenhalstate.com)

20 Peacock Co Durham

Peacock is one of three high-spec treehouses built last year alongside the 18th hole at Ramside Hall, a four-star spa hotel near Durham. In each treehouse you can book one room (with a sofa bed in the lounge) or fill all three bedrooms with a group of 12, partying in two hot tubs on the deck. There are two copper bathtubs, a spiral staircase leading to a mezzanine bedroom, and guests have use of the spa and gym.

Details One night's B&B for two from £395/for 12 from £1,045; dogs welcome (ramsidehallhotel.co.uk)



21 Luxury Yorkshire Hut North Yorkshire

Everyone has a shepherd hut these days, but not even David Cameron's is as posh as this. Put out to pasture beside a rolling barley field on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales and Pennine Way, the hut is owned by the wife of the furniture maker Jake Phipps, whose pieces sit among antique mirrors, local prints and limewashed oak floors. Bed linen is from the Cornwall-based Antique Designs; breakfast hampers are sourced from local organic farms, with eggs from Phipps's chickens, who cluck for scraps below your front door.

Details Two nights' B&B for two from £198 (kiphideaways.com)

22 Pen-y-Bryn Powys

This is one of six quirky designer treehouses on a 280-acre sheep farm near Machynlleth in southern Snowdonia. Just getting here is an adventure: guests must walk 15 minutes through a woodland carpeted by bluebells in spring, then climb 40ft up a creaky spiral staircase and cross a rope bridge. Co-created by a former Science Museum exhibit designer, the treehouse is a fantasy of wonky wicker railings, barrel-vaulted ceilings and lampshades made from golden syrup tins. Views over the Dyfi Valley towards Cardigan Bay, porthole windows positioned to let the moonlight in — magical.

Details Three nights' self-catering for five from £399 (living-room.co)

23 Bluebell Corner Clwyd

Launched last year in a wildflower meadow that blushes lilac in spring, Bluebell Corner comprises a vintage gypsy wagon (your bedroom), plus three separate wooden cabins housing kitchen/lounge, loo and shower. The wagon is the real star: once owned by the traveller William Bowman, its interior is a Romany riot of rose-pattern textiles, handpainted patterns, fake-fur cushions and throws, with a wood-burner keeping things snug. Open the door for views to Caer Drewyn, an Iron Age fort you can walk to across the fields.

Details Two nights' self-catering for two from £180 (coolstays.com)

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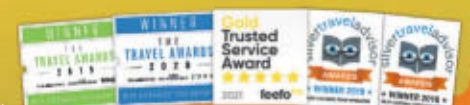
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24 Black Wolf Treehouse Devon

Built around an ancient larch whose knotted trunk climbs right up through the interior, Black Wolf is one of three treehouses in the canopy of a 13-acre native woodland near Bratton Clovelly, between Dartmoor and Bude. The two-bedroom treetop eyrie is reached via a hanging rope bridge; floor-to-ceiling bifold glass doors lead on to a deck with a hot tub and dining table. Between sheepskin rugs, a rolltop bath, a wood-burning stove and russet sofas, plus blankets woven by the owner's uncle on Skye, you'll be cosy.

Details Two nights' self-catering for four from £500 (wolfwoodtreehouses.co.uk)

25 The Hide Dyfed

This grass-roofed wooden cabin lies in four acres of wildflower meadow and dragonfly pond near Cardigan Bay. The owners have three children and it shows. A communal kitchen in a converted piggyery shared with three other cabins has an honesty shop with marshmallows for toasting; wood is supplied for campfires. There are fishing nets and a rowing boat, or go across the fields to Aberaeron.

Details Two nights' self-catering for four from £240; dogs welcome (onecatfarm.com)

26 Turtle Dove East Lothian

Chickens to feed, pygmy goats and alpacas to pet, a magnificent one-mile beach just across the dunes — Harvest Moon has serious claims on being the best glampsite in Britain. Halfway between the surfing beaches in Dunbar and Bass Rock boat trips in North Berwick, this is a back-to-basics group of treehouses and beach cabins. Turtle Dove is the closest cabin to the beach, with a cosy pine interior that shoehorns in a double room, bunk room, sofa bed, wood-burning stove and closet bedroom cute enough to cause family war.

Details Two nights' self-catering for eight from £340 (harvestmoonholidays.com)

27 Hinterland Cabin Clwyd

Take one dilapidated log cabin with lurid 1970s decor, add a can-do ex-hotelier

with a passion for salvage jobs, and what you get is this beautiful one-bedroom cabin at the northern tip of Snowdonia national park. The decor is more boutique hotel than holiday rental, with underfloor heating, artfully bare lightbulbs and geometric floor tiles. A deck made from local slate and Conwy Valley railway sleepers has a sofa, coffee table and a hot tub facing a sweep of Snowdonian summits.

Details Four nights' self-catering for two from £1,095; dogs welcome (uniquehomestays.com)

28 Halcyon Stirlingshire

Opened in the autumn near Loch Lomond, Halcyon and its sister cabin Elysium were created by the Trossachs artist Rob Mulholland, whose lifesize mirrored figures are a familiar sight in the surrounding glens and bens. The dark, gothic larch-clad cabin marries traditional corrugated roofing and contemporary sculpted metal branches, decorated artfully with farm tools found on the 21-acre site. In a wee dell just off the West Highland Way, the cabin has a fairy-lit outdoor bath staring up into the birch forest.

Details Two nights' self-catering for two from £340 (arcadiaglamping.co.uk).

29 Ebb Isle of Lewis

The Outer Hebrides aren't short of blinding white beach and turquoise sea, but Uig Sands is its poster boy. Here, blinking out from huge picture windows across the Atlantic, Ebb (and sister

Flow) is a zinc-roofed quarter-pipe cabin that opened last spring on the machair above the sand. Larch walls and striking blue sofas match the seascape below; a timber deck has mighty views, with nothing between you and Newfoundland but the odd golden eagle. Walk the beach, feast on seafood at the new Uig Sands restaurant, or take a boat trip from Miavaig.

Details Seven nights' self-catering for two from £595 (carnishcabins.co.uk)

30 Treecreeper Perthshire

Treecreeper is one of five new treehouses at the start of the Highlands on 1,500 acres once owned by

descendants of Rob Roy. Each treehouse is named after a bird from the mixed native woodland and has a large lounge with wood-burner and sofa, plus a deck with a copper bathtub where you listen to the River Teith below. With upcycled corrugated-iron shower walls, exposed copper piping and old farmhouse doors patched together to form the bedroom wall, Treecreeper is our pick. It's a quirky base for walking and fishing on the estate near Doune.



Details Two nights' self-catering for a family of four from £500 (lanricktreehouses.co.uk)




Halcyon, Stirlingshire



24 Black Wolf Treehouse, Devon



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Day 5. Towns of Provence

Travel by coach to Saint Didier for a visit to Nougaterie Silvain, the home of local nougat production before stopping at Isle sur-la-Sorgue, known as the 'Venice of Provence'. Lastly, visit Gordes, a beautiful old village crowned by its 12th-century castle.

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