

# ROOMS AT THE INN

THE HOUSE & GARDEN TEAM  
PUTS NINE COUNTRY PUBS  
WITH ROOMS TO THE TEST



## *The Gurnard's Head* | CORNWALL

**LOCATION** This secluded spot at the edge of west Cornwall is sandwiched in between sheep-speckled moorland and the rugged Cornish coastline; the Atlantic cliffs are just a 10-minute walk away.

**ROOMS** The seven rooms have a rustic, cosy character: fresh flowers, mustard-yellow walls, Roberts radios, Welsh blankets and stashes of

classic books. Room seven is the largest, with views to the ocean.

**FOOD** There is a wide range of wines and ales to complement the daily changing menu of simple and delicious, locally sourced food. Fish is often delivered from day boats - the smoked Newlyn haddock with poached duck egg was a notably tasty dish.

**SELLING POINT** The awe-inspiring coastline. Take the footpath down to the headland for seal spotting, or walk 20 minutes to Porthmeor Cove, the closest beach. Fishing and foraging walks can be arranged through the pub.

**FACTS** Rooms from £115. The Gurnard's Head, near Zennor, St Ives. 01736-796928; [gurnardshead.co.uk](http://gurnardshead.co.uk) ▷



## The Old Stocks Inn | GLOUCESTERSHIRE

**LOCATION** Right on Stow-on-the-Wold's pretty market square, this is housed in what was once a seventeenth-century coaching inn. A charming illustrated map of the area's highlights is provided, making it perfect for Cotswold novices.

**ROOMS** There are 16 contemporary and relaxed rooms featuring original beams and exposed stone walls. One of the family rooms has a 'bunker' for children with triple bunk beds and a games console to keep them entertained. Double rooms have a roll-top bath and a complimentary minibar.

**FOOD** With a menu that is seasonal, modern and hearty, the restaurant is a draw in its own right. All food, and many of the beers and spirits, are locally sourced. The blade of beef was tender and delicious, and the burgers looked good, too.

**SELLING POINT** This is a modern-thinking inn with great attention to all of the details - from the in-room Nespresso machines and generous toiletries from Aromatherapy Associates to the excellent cocktail menu at the bar.

**FACTS** Rooms from £119. The Old Stocks Inn, Stow-on-the-Wold. 01451-830666; oldstocksin.com



## The Rose & Crown | NORFOLK

**LOCATION** With roses climbing up its white walls, The Rose & Crown is hard to miss in the charmingly sleepy village of Snettisham, a short drive from Norfolk's west coast.

**ROOMS** Despite the inn's fourteenth-century origins, the 16 rooms are light and airy. In our pastel-hued Staircase room, the bathroom had a satisfyingly modern shower. Eager for tea after a bracing beach walk, we were pleased to discover fresh milk available.

**FOOD** Alongside well-presented pub classics and nods to the locality - such as Cromer crab spaghetti - there's a modish hint of Ottolenghi's influence in starters like hot smoked mackerel with butternut and pomegranate, served in the three buzzing restaurant rooms.

**SELLING POINT** In contrast to chain hotels, The Rose & Crown is clearly stamped with the personality of its owners (who also own the Bank House hotel in nearby King's Lynn).

**FACTS** Rooms from £100. The Rose & Crown, Snettisham. 01485-541382; roseandcrownsnettisham.co.uk



## The Running Horses | SURREY

**LOCATION** Only a short drive from London, Mickleham is set within the rural Surrey Hills. The undulating Downs make the area a real hotspot for cycling - so be prepared for Lycra-clad bikers whizzing past your window.

**ROOMS** There are five, all with suitably equine names - the pub was once a favourite for stabling horses racing at Epsom. Ascot has panelled walls and a view of the Norman church opposite.

**FOOD** The restaurant is clearly popular with locals and was packed on a Saturday night. Traditional British fare prevails - the calf's liver main course was particularly good - and hearty helpings left little room for pudding.

**SELLING POINT** This is a surprising bolt-hole in a quiet corner of the commuter belt - ideal for those wanting a quick injection of rural life. If something a little more active appeals, bikes are available to borrow and Box Hill is good for a gentle amble.

**FACTS** Rooms from £110. The Running Horses, Mickleham, near Dorking. 01372-372279; the-runninghorses.co.uk



## The Greyhound on the Test | HAMPSHIRE

**LOCATION** Situated at one end of the high street in the village of Stockbridge. At the back, beyond a sunny dining terrace, is the River Test and the pub's half mile of double-bank fishing.

**ROOMS** Most of the 10 rooms are painted in a dark palette with lighter, pretty fabrics. Leet 3 has the best bathroom; Room 7 is the biggest and the quietest.

**FOOD** This is a cut above your average pub menu, with a definite emphasis on local produce - smoked Test trout and Stockbridge mushrooms, for example.

**SELLING POINT** Trout fishing. This part of Hampshire is a fly fisherman's paradise and the pub manages up to 70 local beats on the Test, the Itchen and the Avon rivers, and caters for private fishing parties from April to October.

**FACTS** Rooms from £140. The Greyhound on the Test, Stockbridge. 01264-810833; thegreyhoundonthetest.co.uk



## The Plough | OXFORDSHIRE

**LOCATION** A 25-minute drive west from Oxford, Kelmscott is one of the prettiest villages in the Cotswolds. A stone's throw from the Thames path (see 'Tales of the riverbank' overleaf), it makes a good starting point for beautiful walks along the river.

**ROOMS** The eight rooms in the Grade II-listed, seventeenth-century inn are unfussy and decorated with paints and fabrics in soft colours. Room three has a roll-top bath; room four is the largest.

**FOOD** It is clear the food is locally sourced and seasonal. During my visit, the new-season English asparagus and the sea trout with samphire and avocado was particularly delicious.

**SELLING POINT** The Plough is only a two-minute walk from Kelmscott Manor, William Morris's former country retreat. Open every Wednesday and Saturday from April until October, the sixteenth-century manor is crammed with Morris's designs.

**FACTS** From £70. The Plough, Kelmscott, Lechlade. 01367-253543; theploughinnkelmscott.com



*The Talbot Inn* | SOMERSET

**LOCATION** Only a stone's throw from the fifteenth-century St Andrew's Church in the exquisite Somerset village of Mells. Much of the inn, accessed via an archway, is dotted around a pretty cobbled courtyard.

**ROOMS** The higgledy-piggledy interior conceals eight rooms, which - whether small or large - are beautifully designed. Go for room one with its white four-poster bed and in-room roll-top bath. Room seven has two bedrooms, so it's perfect for travelling with children.

**FOOD** Delicious, seasonal fare with much of the produce coming from the inn's kitchen garden. At weekends, food in the Coach House Grill Room is cooked on an open charcoal and wood fire, and served at communal dining tables.

**SELLING POINT** The on-site cookery school, Kitchen Table Cookery, offers one- and two-day courses, which are led by the Talbot Inn chef Clare Liardet and the cookery writer Joanna Weinberg. There are also weekly drop-in demonstrations and tastings.

**FACTS** Rooms from £100. The Talbot Inn, Mells. 01373-812254; talbotinn.com



*Lord Crewe Arms* | COUNTY DURHAM

**LOCATION** The honey-coloured village of Blanchland nestles in the picturesque wooded Derwent Valley - a North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Built from the remains of a twelfth-century abbot's lodge for the nearby Blanchland Abbey, the inn has played host to the likes of W H Auden and Philip Larkin.

**ROOMS** Harking back to its medieval roots, many of the rooms feature ogee-arched windows and stone chimneypieces. The decoration is comfortable, elegant and stylish, with homely touches including jars of fudge and well-thumbed poetry books.

**FOOD** The excellent modern British menu is made with home-grown and local produce. Start with a G&T in the atmospheric Crypt Bar, a subterranean medieval vaulted room. For the full experience, have breakfast in bed.

**SELLING POINT** This is a perfect weekend escape for those wanting comfort, a dash of romance and beautiful countryside (there's fishing, cycling and walking right on the doorstep).

**FACTS** Rooms from £99. Lord Crewe Arms, Blanchland, Consett. 01434-675469; lordcrewearmsblanchland.co.uk

*George and Dragon* | CUMBRIA

**LOCATION** The pub is on the outskirts of the village of Clifton, near the Cumbrian market town of Penrith - *Withnail and I* country for those who have seen the film. The heart of the Lake District is a short drive away.

**ROOMS** Although comfortable and clean, the rooms in this old coaching inn are often small and a little basic. The best are those with roll-top baths - be sure to ask when booking.

**FOOD** Reputedly one of the best dining pubs in Cumbria, the food is definitely the main draw here. Produce is reared and grown down the road at Askham Hall, home of the Lowther family, who own the pub.

**SELLING POINT** Dogs and people are equally welcome. Proximity to the M6 (beware a little traffic noise) makes this a useful place to punctuate a drive to Scotland (the Scottish border is 30 miles away).

**FACTS** Rooms from £95. George and Dragon, Clifton. 01768-86538; georgeanddragondifton.co.uk □ All room prices are per night and include breakfast



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