

10 OF THE BEST WATERSIDE HOTELS

From lochs, loughs and lakes to the English coastline, Blossom Green has traversed the British Isles to find the best places to stay on the water's edge. Each is shore to please...



ANOTHER PLACE, THE LAKE, CUMBRIA

Kissing the shores of Ullswater amid seven hectares of Lake District National Park, convivial new hotel The Lake combines homely interiors inspired by its surrounds with action and adventure. Being connected with the elements is key here: take the plunge with wild swimming, explore the islands that punctuate the lake by kayak or boat, cast a line for perch, pike and char from the jetty, or head to the fells for hiking and cycling. A walnut grove makes for easy walks, while the dramatic glass-walled indoor pool acts as the gateway to zen in the spa. Dine at Rampsbeck, where local produce – Herdwick lamb, Morecambe Bay shrimp and Cumberland sausage – is excellent, or head to the lakeside fire pit for a barbecue.

INSIDER TIP Head home via Michelin-starred restaurant The Forest Side, a 40-minute drive away along lake Thirlmere.

THE DETAIL Doubles from £230. [another.place](#)

ST BRIDES SPA HOTEL, PEMBROKESHIRE

Perched on a clifftop overlooking the Saundersfoot coast and with an infinity pool that's more California than Carmarthen Bay, 34-room St Brides is a top addition to the Welsh waterside. Poised on the south-eastern edge of the Pembrokeshire Coastal National Park, it's an area ripe for discovery. Saunter to the beach with an ice cream cone in hand from Italian creamery Sidoli's, or potter along the sand to the historic walled seaside town of Tenby, before drifting back to the spa. Most of the tastefully maritime-themed bedrooms look out to sea, but upgrading to the 'Best' category guarantees king-sized beds and terraces that call for breakfast be taken alfresco: locally caught beetroot-cured salmon and scrambled eggs is on our plate.

INSIDER TIP Take a boat over to Caldey Island. The piercing blue waters are a colour unseen elsewhere in the UK.

THE DETAIL Doubles from £190. [stbridesspahotel.com](#)



ST BRIDES SPA HOTEL





KINLOCH LODGE



KINLOCH LODGE, ISLE OF SKYE

There are few destinations as evocative as the Scottish Hebrides. The region's crisp lochs, babbling brooks, undulating mountains and expansive skies combine to create some of the world's most spectacular scenes. Set amid the untamed foothills of Sleat, this romantic hotel is worth the journey. The hunting lodge makes a superb starting point for exploring the area. Set your own pace with wild walks (look out for eagles, otters and rare red foxes), deer stalking and fly fishing on the loch. Whisky on tap awaits your return along with a Michelin-starred lunch from Marcello Tully, who serves local Drumfearn mussels, Stornoway black pudding, west-coast scallops and Shetland cod. Rooms in the North Lodge have terraces that look out over the countryside and make an ideal spot for a breakfast of Scottish kippers.

INSIDER TIP Forage for wild garlic, sorrel, edible seaweed, samphire and scurvy grass along the sea-loch shores.

THE DETAIL Doubles from £240. kinloch-lodge.co.uk

SEA GARDEN COTTAGES, ISLES OF SCILLY

Head to Lilliputian Tresco, an endearing island off the Cornish coast, and you'll be surrounded by an aqueous display at every turn. A mild climate, bright-white sand, fresh sea air and a car-free policy make it a great family option. Right on the water's edge at Old Grimsby, this collection of modern cottages is ideal for large, multi-generational groups, with access to the calm waters of Porth Hellick Beach. Abundant space, high-tech kitchens and barbecues lend themselves to self-catering, but you can also order food from superb local deli Tresco Stores, or go all-inclusive with meals at the casual-yet-quality Ruin Beach Café. Hire a bike to meander around archeological sites, deserted beaches and quaint villages, and don't miss the sub-tropical Tresco Abbey Garden with its palms, aloe and eucalyptus trees.

INSIDER TIP Fly in to St Mary's or take the ferry from Cornwall and then transfer by shuttle from there.

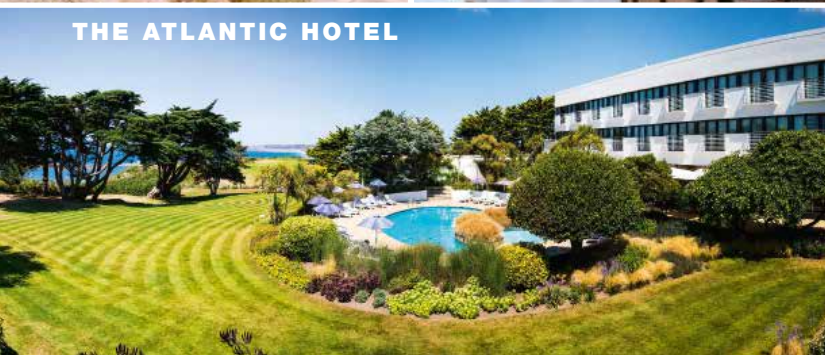
THE DETAIL One-bedroom cottages from £350. tresco.co.uk



Photos by Luke Hayes; Ian Richards; Tim Kavanagh; Jim Varney/Hospitality Media; Helen Cathcart; Dan Hooper; James Darring; Judi Blakeburn; Jo Hanley; Sideways



THE ATLANTIC HOTEL



THE ATLANTIC HOTEL, JERSEY

A lungful of briny sea air comes as standard at The Atlantic, found on Jersey's south-west coast and on its most enviable stretch of sand, at St Ouen's Bay. While the 4,000-year-old Les Blanchés Banques dunes make worthy viewing, most visitors make the trip for its superb Ocean Restaurant, which draws influence from the crashing waves beyond, with decor and dishes sporting a subtle seafaring theme. Less swashbuckle, more slick, chef Will Holland's menu features the finest Channel Island produce from across land and sea. Jersey scallop carpaccio sets the bar high, while local crab with mango salsa shouldn't be missed. Appetite sated, adventurous types will surely want to give paragliding a go (windswept Jersey is a great spot for first-timers), while those less keen on heights can watch loved ones glide past from a prime spot by the pool.

INSIDER TIP Jersey's flat and quiet roads make for idyllic cycling. Saddle up at St Ouen's Bay and peddle to St Aubin's. **THE DETAIL** Doubles from £280. theatlantichotel.com

TRESANTON, CORNWALL

For a touch of the Med on the Cornish coast, look no further than hotelier Olga Polizzi's shipshape St Mawes stalwart Tresanton. The converted cluster of fisherman's cottages cascades down to the water like a British take on the Amalfi that ensures stonking panoramas of the hilly Roseland Peninsula from 30 characterful bedrooms. The design draws inspiration from a cool colour palette, modern art and driftwood, while a botanical wonderland garden and a three-tiered beach club with a juice bar and direct access to the rockpool below complete the look. Days are best spent discovering hidden coves before an alfresco supper. Opt for Mediterranean-leaning cuisine such as turbot with olives and razor clams at the chic restaurant, or book a place at one of the weekly summer barbecues and soak up the golden-hour sun.

INSIDER TIP Book a day's sailing on the hotel's wooden yacht *Pinuccia* and don't forget to pack a bottle of fizz. **THE DETAIL** Doubles from £315. tresanton.com



TRESANTON



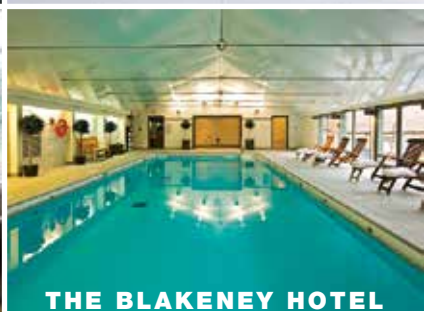
THE GEORGE IN RYE



THE GEORGE IN RYE, EAST SUSSEX

There's no shortage of boutique beds along the southern coast of England, but down the cobbled Cinque Ports streets of Rye, this is our pick. The 18th-century coaching inn on the Brede and Rother rivers channels the best of coast and country. The 34 rooms that sprawl from the eaves to the courtyard garden are eclectic, featuring mid-century quirks. Lavender-scented pillows, a shower stall made from a reclaimed wig cupboard and marble roll-top baths add character, while the High Weald Landscape Trail is ideal for ramblers. Treasure hunters should make tracks to the antique shops of Strand Quay, stopping off for elevenses in one of the many tearooms along the way. Come evening, try the George Grill, or opt for drinks at the George Tap, which showcases Sussex's wines and ciders, including those from Chapel Down, just down the road.

INSIDER TIP Make the journey to nearby Camber Sands and set up camp to enjoy a picnic hamper provided by the hotel. **THE DETAIL** Doubles from £120. thegeorgeinrye.com



THE BLAKENEY HOTEL

THE BLAKENEY HOTEL, NORFOLK

While a quaint Norfolk village might not seem the obvious choice in a quest for waterside lodgings, this classically British quayside set-up will make you think twice. First opened in 1923, the family-run hotel resides along the estuary where traders once offloaded exotic spices from far-flung lands. A typically East Anglian backdrop of salt marshes and creek-strewn mudflats that creep towards the horizon frame the tranquil scene, which is best viewed at dawn from the balcony of one of 60 elegant rooms. Birdlife is a real draw. Top-tier twitchers will choose Cley-next-the-Sea, which teems with spoonbills, terns and oystercatchers. Arm yourself with snacks of whelks and cockles from the seafood shack and later, a terrace calls for fish and chips or perhaps pork belly with parmentiers in the homely, good-quality restaurant.

INSIDER TIP Some of Norfolk's loveliest spots are within easy reach, such as Holkham and the market towns Holt and Burnham. **THE DETAIL** Doubles from £129. blakeney-hotel.co.uk

Photos by Matt Porteous; Tresanton; Anneli Marinovich; James Fennell; Sean Elliot; Fritz Von Der Schulenburg

BALLYFIN, COUNTY LAOIS

The vast Ballyfin Demesne is home to the only Irish hotel to make our list. Tucked away in the foothills of the Slieve Bloom Mountains, it's off the tourist trail and comprises secluded hidden valleys, quaint villages, forested hills and featherbed bogs that form an ideal habitat for pine martens, mink and cuckoos. In contrast is this exquisite Regency mansion. It sprawls over 250ha – 11 of which are a private lake where you can fish for tench and eel. Offering 20 grand rooms, privacy is assured across the sublimely decorated house. A 24m library and six reception rooms draped with antiques and finery mean you'll hardly notice other guests. Horse riding, archery, clay pigeon shooting and falconry are popular here and a spa and heated indoor pool are also on hand for lazy afternoons.

INSIDER TIP Book the new Gardener's Cottage. It's perfect for special occasions and is the only stand-alone residence. **THE DETAIL** Doubles from £590. ballyfin.com

BALLYFIN



SEAHAM HALL



SEAHAM HALL, COUNTY DURHAM

Writing from Seaham, Lord Byron – who married in the dramatic grounds of this grand edifice – penned: 'I saw the sea in all the glories of surf and foam.' You can see the reason for his rapture in this balmy, regenerated harbour town, and even more so on higher ground, where the crash of the North Sea and expansive seascapes are ever-present. As well as bracing beach walks to see the swell of the rockpools and the marina, water lovers will heed the hotel's spa with its focus on indoor and outdoor aqua-therapies including a salt sauna, plunge pools, Indian steam rooms, a hammam and ice fountains. Afterwards, retreat to a luxurious room and fling the French doors wide to let the invigorating sea air flow in. End the day at The Dining Room, whose Best of British menu showcases fresh northern and east-coast ingredients such as Swaledale lamb and Whitby crab.

INSIDER TIP Book the split-level Ada Lovelace Suite, which has two slipper tubs tucked into a bay window with glorious views. **THE DETAIL** Doubles from £235. seaham-hall.co.uk