

THE NEW FOREST: PADDLE ALONG TO THE PERFECT STAYCATION

Hampshire is the home to one of the largest remaining tracts of unenclosed pasture land, where you will find soft sandy beaches, views to peek at the Isle of Wight, fossil hunting and King Henry VIII's coastal fortress, Hurst Castle.

The Balmer Lawn Spa Hotel

In the heart of The New Forest in Hampshire lies the Balmer Lawn Hotel and Spa; hidden away enough for a tranquil break, but easy enough to locate. This space boasts British grandeur and not solely due to the fact that you get front seats to view the weekend cricket matches and woodland wildlife at play, because actually, The Balmer Lawn Hotel is enriched in British history, which makes it an even more glorious place to explore. With it being one of the significant landmarks in the centre of the New Forest National Park. Originally built in the mid 1800's as a hunting lodge, it became an army hospital during the First World War, and during the Second World War as a base for troops to prepare for the D-Day landings before being turned into a hotel, which now gushes luxury entangled with comfort.

The centrepiece that welcomes you is the grand staircase, taking you up to your home for the night; showcasing views of the forest housing ponies and deer. The hotel spoils you with king size beds and a perfect mix of modern décor and English tradition, (furry family members also welcome!).

Enjoy a mojito in the pool, a smooth whiskey by the fountain or a pint of Smokin' Deer bitter from the hotel's very own microbrewery, before savouring a fine meal at the Hotel's 2AA Rosette Restaurant – Beresford's. They take fine dining to the next level by making their own bread, butter, in-house smokery and butchery all complemented by local ingredients and trimmings from their own kitchen garden to tingle your taste buds.

But why come to this very spot in Hampshire?

Relax

Their Saltus Spa is blessed with a touch of heaven. An intimate setting providing one of the most relaxing treatments I have ever undergone. You can pamper yourself with an invigorating facial or soul changing massage, post a relaxing indoor, or (if the British weather allows it) outdoor swim. Want to feel like your weekend away has given your mind a month off from work? I would recommend you try one of their luxurious treatments.

Work?

Of course the last thing on your list of things to do when escaping to the serene English countryside is work. But hear me out: the fresh air and open space can do wonders for the mind. There are six meeting rooms of all shapes and sizes. Small and intimate for interviews and small meetings, then on to larger rooms for conferences and events. Unusually, each room has its own private garden/outdoor space – perfect for outdoor working. So whatever your group size, you can enjoy a company retreat that can be refreshing, as well as informative. With the suites being spacious and tastefully decorated, this could be the perfect escape from the mundane office for your team.



Balmer Lawn Hotel and Spa. The forest surrounds this 4* former hunting lodge, which happens to be a favourite haunt for the ponies and donkeys to gather. The hotel's leisure facilities are superb. There are indoor and outdoor swimming pools, sauna, tennis and squash courts, gym and Saltus Spa (featuring Espa products) offers a comprehensive range of treatments and full day experiences. Evening meals are served in the AA 2 Rosette award-winning Beresford's Restaurant. Each of the bedrooms are individually designed, most of which have views across the forest and some are designated dog friendly. There's bike hire onsite and routes from the hotel. Rooms start at £189 dinner, bed and breakfast per night based on two people sharing. See website for special offers www.balmerlawnhotel.co.uk or call 01590 623 116.