

Going for green

Whether it's a forest bothy or an eco-friendly lodge, our subscribers have visited some beautiful destinations that are leading the way for green tourism



Larch Green Lodges

REVIEWED BY JOHNNY BING AND BLANAID KEARNEY FROM EDINBURGH

As we drove up into the hills above Port Glasgow, we enjoyed a perspective of the glen that I didn't even know existed. The water glistened in the evening light, hills taking on a dramatic atmosphere. We arrived in the early evening, collected our keys from a lock-box to avoid unnecessary interaction and walked into one of two pristine eco-lodges. Air Source Heat Pumps reduce electricity consumption by 75%, thermal panels help heat water for the lodges and sedum grows on the roof to attract birds, bees and butterflies.

These plush lodges have an open plan living room and fully stocked kitchen. There are two double bedrooms (both en-suite) boasting magnificent views. On top of this there is a stunning outdoor area to explore. The hot tub, ready for our arrival, overlooks the valley, and sits alongside a fire-pit and BBQ. On a raised balcony was a lovely outdoor dining area.

We wish we'd had more time to explore the renowned local hill-walking trails surrounding the lodge, a number of which were mere metres from the front door of the cabin. We did, however, manage to enjoy the total bliss of the comforts of the cabin alongside the beauty of its surroundings.

The next morning we went to meet the three resident alpacas. They are a fantastic source of entertainment for kids – although my girlfriend and I (both in our twenties) thoroughly enjoyed our trip to see them as well. This lodge provided a relaxing break that we could not recommend highly enough.



UNDERCRAIGS FARM, Old Greenock Road, Renfrewshire PA14 6YS.
www.larchgreenlodges.com
Prices from £420 for two nights min.



Comrie Croft, Nordic Katas

REVIEWED BY ISLA HALL AND ALISON DOURLEY FROM KIRKNEWTON

We arrived at our Kata – nestled in peaceful woodland – and instantly felt at home in this amazing setting. Everything had been thought of to make our stay relaxing. We were greeted by an incredible host Calum who kindly showed us the whole estate which is simply sublime. We would love to revisit.

As a florist who likes to camp, walk and cycle and is partial to campfire marshmallows, the Katas provided it all. The shop has a range of local produce and the café sells produce straight from the garden, along with cakes and coffees that can be enjoyed outside under canvas with views of the hillside.

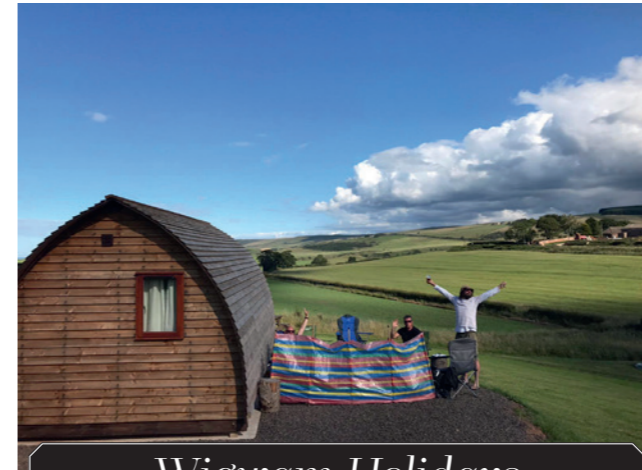
Comrie Croft is known for its biking, with trails to suit every level, a bike hire service and shop. You can even try their eco-friendly electric bikes. We opted to bag a few Munros just north of Blair Atholl – from Comrie Croft there are 43 to choose from within one hour, so plenty reasons to come back.

We were tired after our walk and the lower shower block (run on wind and solar power) was most welcome and better than any spa day. The whole toilet and shower block was very clean and well maintained. A short walk back from the showers up to the Kata with our very own outdoor campfire, marshmallows, wine and hammock – we were not moving anywhere. A recent addition to the kata has been an outdoor seating area which even has a gas stove and dining table.

A perfect green holiday in the great outdoors. Neither of us wanted to leave and there were no midges!



BRAIN CROFT, by Crieff, Perthshire PH7 4JZ.
www.comriecroft.com
Prices from £99 (Sun-Thurs) or for weekend £229 (Fri/Sat)



Wigwam Holidays

REVIEWED BY THE MACLEODS FROM INVERNESS

Six wigwams, built onto the hillside at Cove Farm, enjoy views over glorious farmland and three of them have the added bonus of their own wood-fired hot tubs.

Our wigwam was named Cove; the interior was spotlessly clean and tardis-like. Incredibly there was ample space for our family of four and the compact kitchen provided everything we could need. Beds were comfy and the shower powerful enough to wash away the grime and sand garnered from a day of outdoor activity prior to a dip in the toasty hot tub.

A sunset walk to Cove Harbour saw us gingerly venture through a tunnel in the rocks to emerge onto the hidden little beach. The perfect spot for an evening paddle before heading back to the warmth of a campfire and a seat under the stars.

Nearby Pease Bay is a haven for surfers and in the morning we braved the waves as the kids gave their bodyboards and wetsuits a good workout.

We were fortunate that we were able to eat outside at the picnic bench, but each wigwam has a table and chairs inside too, in case of typical Scottish weather. The wigwams are dog friendly and in her day our old dog would have loved exploring the paths around the site, leaping into water in search of sticks.

The owners made us feel incredibly welcome and we can't recommend it enough for a break away from the digital world.



COVE FARM, Cockburnspath, TD13 5YP.
www.wigwamholidays.com
Prices from £160 per night for 4 people sharing.



Cairngorm Bothies

REVIEWED BY THE BOOTLANDS FROM ROSLIN

If, like me, you've ever fantasised about living deep in the forest, surrounded by nothing but trees and nature and with only the sound of a buzzard soaring above the canopy to interrupt the peace, then a stay in one of six 'bothies' in the beautiful Blelack Woods is for you.

We stayed in Distiller's Bothy, which is a beautiful wooden building, raised off the ground, with a spacious decked verandah, large picnic bench and a BBQ. We particularly enjoyed breakfasting outside, enjoying the serenity as we slowly woke up and prepared for the day ahead.

Each bothy sleeps up to four people, Distiller's has a double bedroom and small single bed with trundle in the living area. These beds were perfect for children, but anyone over 5ft tall would have cold toes! The bothies are powered by a bank of large solar panels. We enjoyed lighting the wood burning oven, which provided heat, hot water and a means to boil the kettle and cook indoors. The kitchen has a sink, fridge and all the basic essentials. The shower was powerful.

Wandering around the forest tracks we saw deer. Just a five-minute drive away is the Burn O'Vat providing a great wee stroll along to a fascinating glacial pothole measuring 13 metres deep and a hair-raising scramble up the side of a waterfall that the children enjoyed infinitely more than me.

The fact that the bothies are eco-friendly and full of ethically sourced furnishings means this is a staycation you can enjoy while minimising your impact on the environment.



LOGIE COLDSTONE, Aberdeenshire AB34 5NJ.
www.cairngormbothies.com
Prices from £102. per night.

Location



- 1 Larch Green Lodges
Tel: 07754 452 917
- 2 Comrie Croft
Tel: 01764 670140
- 3 Wigwam Holidays
Tel: 07367 102347
- 4 Cairngorm Bothies
Tel: 01339 289103



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