



# COUNTRY ROADS, TAKE ME HOME

WALKS,  
STUNNING  
SCENERY &  
BOUTIQUE  
HOTELS

GET YOUR SLICE OF THE RURAL LIFE IN THE UK. SKIP LONDON AND TRY OUT ONE OF THE EXCELLENT COUNTRY HOUSE HOTELS

**BY JULIANNA BARNABY**

Photo: AFP





HIGHLAND FLING: Knockinaam Lodge in Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland

IF YOU'VE BEEN TO the teeming metropolis that is London too many times and are looking for something a bit different to try this summer the UK's countryside is ripe for exploration. As the UK summer gets underway, now is the perfect time to go. Walks, stunning scenery not to mention excellent boutique hotels — it's time to discover...

#### **Knockinaam Lodge — Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland**

Those looking for peace and solitude should head to the little-explored area of Dumfries and Galloway. In the southwest of Scotland, the region has the dramatic vistas and friendly locals common to Scotland but is easily accessible and comes

## WHITE-WASHED VILLAGES, LOCAL PUBS AND GREEN COUNTRYSIDE

without the hoard of tourists synonymous with the British summertime.

Perched on the little-explored western edge of Scotland and overlooking the Irish sea, Knockinaam Lodge is the last word in understated luxury for those that want to get away from it all. Boasting just ten bedrooms, all individually decorated and most with views out to the ocean it's a beautiful destination. Guests are cosseted to perfection and made to

feel at home in this beautiful manor house.

Gourmands need look no further — the hotel is home to one of Scotland's few Michelin-starred restaurants outside of Edinburgh. Meals encapsulate the bold flavours of local produce, presented with a finesse that would satisfy even the choosiest of diners.

Whisky aficionados can settle into the library and peruse the vast list, sampling one or two along the way.

Those brave enough can dip a toe in the Irish sea or spend time on the property's small private beach. The surrounding area of is ripe for exploration — you can strike off on numerous cliff walks from the door of the hotel.

The walk to Portpatrick along the dramatic

coastline is picture perfect, once there the village restaurants have some of the freshest seafood to be found. Don't miss out.

*Portpatrick, Stranraer, DG9 9AD  
+44 177681 0471  
www.knockinaamlodge.com*

#### **Summer Lodge, Evershot, Dorset**

Dorset is the land of the traditional English afternoon cream tea, Thomas Hardy, one of England's most beautiful stretches of coastline — and the Summer Lodge.

Previously known as Wessex, Dorset is a gourmand's paradise — there are restaurants, farmers markets and artisan producers galore and plenty of opportunities to burn the calories off whilst rambling along picturesque

should not be missed even if you are not staying in the hotel itself. The wonderful pairing of chef Steve Titman and award-winning sommelier Eric Zweibel combine their impeccable knowledge of local produce and world wines for a very memorable meal.

*9 Fore Street  
Evershot, Dorchester,  
Dorset DT2 0JR  
+44 1935 482 000  
www.summerlodgehotel.co.uk*

#### **Grosvenor Hotel Pulford, Cheshire**

If you are looking for a weekend of pampering on the English/Welsh border, the Grosvenor Pulford is your hotel. This grandiose hotel is perfect for those looking for a home away from home for their stay. Bijoux rooms are matched by stellar service and one of the area's best spas.

The Spa by Kasia offers a mind-boggling array of spa treatments. Those looking for something with a Middle Eastern touch should plump for the ham-

## DORSET IS THE LAND OF THE TRADITIONAL ENGLISH AFTERNOON CREAM TEA AND THOMAS HARDY

mam ritual; three hours of scrubbing, steaming and cossetting that will have you feeling brand new in no time. Otherwise, there

are treatments using products such as Clarins and Elemis to spoil the body and soothe the mind.

Situated in the Cheshire countryside, if you pop past the end of the hotel grounds you'll find yourself in Wales. Clusters of small, whitewashed villages, local pubs and prime countryside make for exciting adventures.

*Wrexham Road, Pulford,  
Chester, Cheshire  
CH4 9DG  
+44 1244 570560  
www.grosvenorpulfordhotel.co.uk*

*wknd@khaleejtimes.com*



COUNTRY CHIC: The Grosvenor Hotel Pulford in Cheshire; (above right) the Summer Lodge in Evershot, Dorset

