

# Condé Nast Traveller

THE  
BEST VILLAS  
IN THE  
WORLD

THE WORLD MADE LOCAL

APRIL 2023

## WILD WORLD

IN SEARCH OF BIG NATURE, FROM DEATH VALLEY TO BALTISTAN

### PLUS

**MUST-VISIT COSTA RICAN LODGES**

**A LOVE LETTER TO BUDAPEST**

**SECRETS OF THE SARDINIAN GOOD LIFE**

**ENGLAND'S FRESHEST PUBS WITH ROOMS**

**OUR ANNUAL FAMILY TRAVEL SPECIAL**





## STAYCATION



### WILD THYME & HONEY GLOUCESTERSHIRE

The name is almost pastiche Cotswolds – the title for a spoof detective series set in Chipping Norton, perhaps. Opening on the banks of Ampney Brook outside Cirencester at the tail end of 2021, this pub takes itself quite seriously, however, with bedrooms that are more hotel than inn. Timber-clad, they are set along willow-screened corridors, with welcome mats and boot scrapers outside each door giving a pleasing sense of independence – though not as much as the stand-alone cottage with its own sauna. An Alpine-style courtyard – double-sided fireplace and sheepskin throws, sheltered by a tepee canvas – links the rooms with the actual pub, The Crown, which has Enomatic fine wines on tap and serves ramped-up comfort food such as robata-seared steaks and bang bang cauliflower. Some guests bag the dining pods along the riverbank but we prefer to be in the thick of the action, in the warm embrace of the wood-lined dining room. *Doubles from £130; [wildthymeandhoney.co.uk](http://wildthymeandhoney.co.uk)*

### HARE & HOUNDS BERKSHIRE

For the full experience, and some Hunter S Thompson-style people-watching, it's best to come to the Hare & Hounds on a race day when the bar is packed with visitors before they head off to Newbury Racecourse, taking care not to tread in one of the many dog bowls. Here's a pub that embraces the area's traditions but has a bit of fun; a little Fife Arms-y rural deluxe: those tweeds and tartans, bold-print wallpapers, antlers for lampshades and chandeliers, log burners every which way. There are nooks and crannies that befit a 17th-century coaching inn, but also a spacious raftered barn for dining, with a menu that elevates pub classics: chicken-and-ham pie, truffle mash, chestnut mushroom gnocchi. The prawn cocktail with shaved fennel flies out like the frontrunner in the 3.10. Bedrooms are spread around the main building and former stables, each coming with a decanter of sloe gin and some with copper tubs. Donnington Castle is just a stone's throw away. *Doubles from £125; [hareandhoundsnewbury.co.uk](http://hareandhoundsnewbury.co.uk)*

### THE PRINCESS ROYAL LONDON

What was once a drab, nondescript Notting Hill pub, suffused with the whiff of stale beer and failure, is now reborn as The Princess Royal, a recent project from the ever-impressive Cubitt House group. The interior is bold, but never brassy, with bright fabrics, bare walls, two bars, a plant-filled conservatory and a rather beautiful garden. The food, which has a Mediterranean burr, is every bit the equal of the design, and is overseen by the group's chef director, the deeply talented Ben Tish. Seafood plays a starring role, with fresh crudos and tartares, Lindisfarne oysters with chorizo, Cornish crab and smoked anchovies on toast. There's also good pasta, whole fish cooked over coals, joyous salads and some serious grilled meat. Oh, and proper cocktails too. Upstairs are four elegant bedrooms, each individually designed, with huge beds, vast tubs or rainforest showers and 100 Acres bath stuff. Nothing grand or pompous, just civilised, comfortable and laid-back. *TOM PARKER BOWLES*  
*Doubles from about £200; [cubitthouse.co.uk](http://cubitthouse.co.uk)*

Clockwise from left: The Princess Royal's bar; No 3 London Road suite at Wild Thyme & Honey; beef wellington at The Boot; window table at The Bell & Crown; Wild Thyme & Honey's private dining domes on the river

