

# 10 wild weekends

Yurts, eco-lodges and retreats, by James Ellis

**1 The Roundhouse**  
Cornwall  
Penzance's Bodrifty was an Iron Age settlement thought to be the first place in Britain to be mentioned in writing; it featured in the works of the Greek explorer Pytheas as far back as 325BC. Now a farm on the wild Penwith Moors, camping couples can bed down in an Iron Age-style replica roundhouse (although there's a four-poster bed with Egyptian cotton sheets).  
**Prices from: £135 per night for two, self-catering; 01179 247877, canopyandstars.co.uk**

**2 Livingstone Lodge, Port Lympne**  
Kent  
If the country's financial state is still crunching your credit, how about heading for a safari in Kent? At the Port Lympne Safari Park you can stay in African-style tents and be regaled with safari tales by a Zimbabwean ranger. Where it gets really wild, though, is when you unzip your tent the next morning and find Grant's zebra, blue wildebeest, Rothschild giraffe and ostrich munching away outside your flap.  
**Prices from £115 per adult, £110 per child per night, dinner, B&B; 0844 8424647, totallywild.net**

**3 Natural Retreats**  
Yorkshire Dales  
Set in rolling countryside just outside Richmond, these 12 three-bedroom wood and stone self-catering cottages (each sleeps six) are far enough apart not to spoil your solitude. Booking through Gorgeous Weekend gets you a concierge service, too.  
**Prices from £670 for each residence for two nights, self-catering; 0844 7366276, gorgeousweekend.com**

**4 Ecopod Boutique Retreat**  
West Highlands  
You may be hard pressed to find this newly opened eco-retreat in Lettershuna as it's so well hidden among beech trees. With



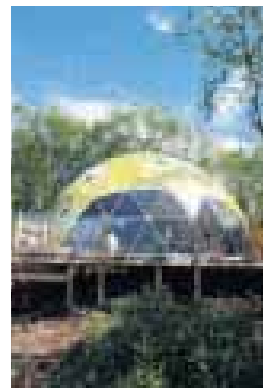
IAN KINGSNORTH

amazing views of Loch Linnhe, Castle Stalker and the mountains of Mull, your pod (sleeps two) comes with many of the usual mod-cons, as well as eco-features such as a wood-pellet biomass stove.  
**Prices from £995 for seven nights self-catering; domesweetdome.co.uk, visitscotland.com/perfect**

**5 Cragside, Caernarfon**  
Wales  
At the end of a remote dirt track outside Caernarfon is this gorgeous two-bedroom (sleeps four) stone cottage with views over Tremadog Bay to Snowdonia. A huge log burner keeps things toasty, even in summer when the wind can blow up a storm over the Welsh mountains.  
**Prices from £510 for three nights, self-catering; 01865 764087, sheepskinlife.com/cragside**

**6 Slack House Farm**  
County Durham  
Head to Weardale in the north Pennines for craggy moors, towering fells, valleys carved by the River Wear and Slack House Farm. The farm is run from 100 per cent renewables: there is no mains electricity, no telephone — and, of course, the loo is a composting one. You stay in either an adjoining byre (one double and one twin) or the farm's yurt.  
**Prices from £30pp per night, B&B; 01388 537292, fleecewithaltitude.co.uk**

**7 The Cabin, Rowbrook**  
Dartmoor  
This one-room cabin (sleeps two) has uninterrupted views of Dartmoor and the River Dart. Sit on the balcony and watch owls, foxes, buzzards and herons. Accommodation is unpretentious and



Spend a weekend in a roundhouse, Cornwall, top, or an ecopod in the West Highlands, above

linen is not supplied — but there is a fire with wood aplenty.  
**Prices from £236 per week, self-catering (available April, May and September only); 01747 828170, hideaways.co.uk**

**8 Caerlaverock Wetland Centre**  
Dumfries  
The wetland centre is a 1,400-acre nature reserve near the north Solway coast that attracts a huge array of birds, including barnacle geese, ospreys, barn owls and wild whooper swans. Stay in the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust's self-catering farmhouse in the middle of the reserve (sleeps 15, but rooms can be rented individually) and you may meet up with your nearest neighbours, a colony of badgers.  
**Prices from £25 per person per night, £200 for exclusive use, self-catering; 01453 891900, wwt.org.uk**

**9 Fforest Farm, Cardigan**  
West Wales  
This eco-campsite claims to be "camping, but just the best bits". Tents sleep up to four; pick a style from Nomad (traditional tunnel style), Threepis (like "teepees but better"), Bell (19th-century military tents) and 20m geodesic domes. Or if you don't do canvas, opt for a stone crogloft. All have cooking spaces but a central lodge serves evening meals.  
**Prices from £365 per week for two, B&B; 01239 623633, www.coldatnight.co.uk**

**10 Hunger Hill Yurts**  
East Devon  
These four yurts on a small farm in the Otter Valley sleep up to four adults and come with comfy beds, wood-burning stoves, Moroccan storage boxes and kilim cushions, plus bathrooms, kitchen areas and hammocks. Pebble Heath common, with woods, streams and views to the coast, is a short walk away.  
**Prices from £300 per yurt; 01395 568454, yurt-holidays.co.uk**

THE TIMES

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