

Client: Cumbria Tourism
Source: She (Main)
Date: 01 May 2009
Page: 134, 135
Circulation: 165008
Size: 665cm2
AVE: 11364.85



LANGDALE ESTATE

FACT FILE

B&B from £100 per night for two sharing (langdale.co.uk; 015394 37302). Virgin Trains (virgintrains.com; 08457 222 333) has a three-hour service from London Euston to Oxenholme. Then 25-min taxi (£11). See golakes.co.uk.

in the Lake District was tested by SHE's Travel Editor Sarah Barrell and her husband Tony Federici.

As first-time visitors to the Lake District, we wanted to stay in the thick of it, but not feel overwhelmed by tourism. The answer was this green-minded hotel, tucked away in the Langdale Valley.

The Langdale Hotel may be set on a 19th-century gunpowder works, but these days the place is more about conserving the natural world than blowing it up. Some of the original storage houses have been converted into holiday cottages, others are replicas – it all looks like the kind of cute little hamlet seen in BBC period dramas. Our room had a lovely arched window where the storeroom doors would have been. Inside, the décor was somewhat standard hotel style, but we loved the bath with massage jets and the balcony looking over steep wooded hills. From here we were almost toe-dangling distance from the Great Langdale Beck as it rushed around the estate towards a vast water wheel that once powered the mills. Today it provides guests at the restaurant with a mesmerising

view. We made it just in time for a late snack in the bar (a tasty chicken tikka masala), dining off chunky wooden tables made from sustainable local green oak.

The restaurant had a 'cottagey' feel, but the food at Purdey's the following night could have featured in any smart urban restaurant. A delicious duck terrine followed by a grilled sea bass for me; a delicate scallop risotto and a rich beef Wellington for him. Ingredients are sourced locally wherever possible. Two courses cost from £22.50 and wine was from £15.95 per bottle.

HOW GREEN?

You wouldn't guess that Langdale has a strong environmental policy to look at it, but the little chimney we saw chuffing busily away near the main building is part of a biomass boiler that burns wood chips from sustainable local forests. It provides two-thirds of the estate's 'carbon lean' energy. Other green credentials include the use of low-energy light bulbs throughout the hotel, wood-burning stoves and fires, plus a massive recycling programme. Feeders for the birds and the

endangered native red squirrel are dotted around the grounds.

WHAT WE DID

The pool is kept clean with a clever UV light system (to reduce chemicals and water usage) but it was too packed with children to tempt us. The estate has the region's best view of the Langdale Pikes – iconic Lake District peaks – so we walked up to Stickle Tarn to get a closer look. This walk (read: steep climb) is made easier by well-maintained stone paths. It's a popular route – and quite rightly so. The fantastic view from the top of the peaceful tarn (lake), backed by even higher mountains, is more than worth the hike.

The following day we decided to take it easy, wandering around Ambleside, a quaint Lake District village about 15 minutes away by road, which has great shops for outdoor clothing. The boat across Lake Windermere (windermere-lakecruises.co.uk), a wonderfully serene half-hour jaunt past wooded islands and flocks of Canadian geese, took us to the chocolate-box village of Bowness for a filling



Client: Cumbria Tourism
Source: She (Main)
Date: 01 May 2009
Page: 134, 135
Circulation: 165008
Size: 665cm2
AVE: 11364.85



lunch in the Hole int' Wall pub.

WE LOVED...

Being able to shuffle across the grounds in our slippers to Founders Seat (a little hill in the centre of the estate) to get views of the Langdale Pikes that you'd usually have to hike up a mountain for.

WE DIDN'T LIKE...

The décor of the main building; somewhat uninspiring. **SHE**

More green alternatives

NATURAL RETREATS

Sustainable accommodation in or near national parks throughout the UK. Try one of 10 elegant three-bedroom eco lodges in the Yorkshire Dales.

Set in two acres of countryside, they are constructed from glass and sustainably sourced wood. Windows face south for solar heat gain and lodges have wood-burning stoves plus hampers of locally sourced organic food. From £495 for two nights (naturalretreats.co.uk; 0161 242 2970).

FOREST HOLIDAYS

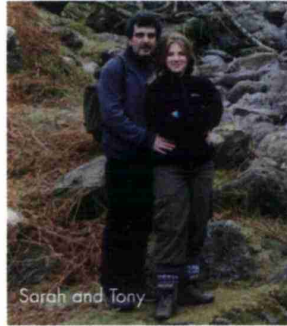
Bed down in a tree-house surrounded by protected woodland. This company offers great forest retreats across the UK in rustic-style cabins that are luxuriously decorated. Cabins in Yorkshire or Cornwall are built into the trees, accessed by a bridge. From £179 for a three-night weekend (forestholidays.co.uk; 0845 130 8225).



The Lake District view overlooking Rydal Water is typically spectacular



Client: Cumbria Tourism
Source: She (Main)
Date: 01 May 2009
Page: 134, 135
Circulation: 165008
Size: 665cm2
AVE: 11364.85



Sarah and Tony



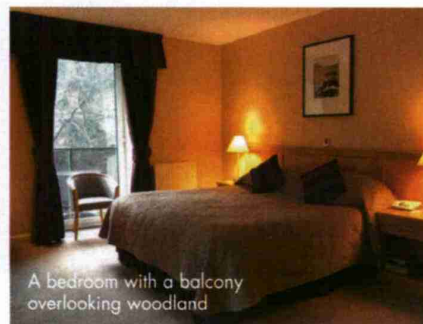
Purdey's Restaurant



The hotel is clad in local grey slate



Langdale's sleek pool and spa



A bedroom with a balcony overlooking woodland