

# THE ULTIMATE UK ROAD TRIP

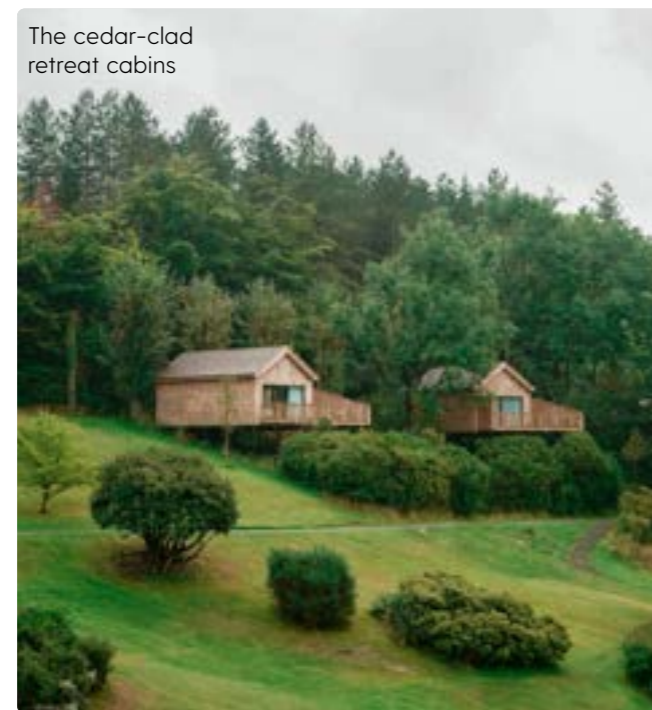
With so many of us quick to travel abroad in search of beauty on our holidays, *House of Coco* Interiors Editor **HAYLEY RUBERY** wanted to showcase exactly how much beauty we have right here in the UK with a tour of some of the best hotels in England and Wales...



I've been a huge fan of staycations for as long as I can remember, whether it's the odd night or two escape or a week-long UK break, this breathtaking country has so much to offer. From the Scottish Highlands to the southwestern tip of Land's End and every inch of woodland, epic beaches, and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in between, there are so many destinations to add to your UK bucket list.

### Day 1 & 2: The Tawny Hotel, Stoke-On-Trent

We started our week-long UK road trip at The Tawny hotel, located in the heart of rural Staffordshire and just one-and-a-half-hours south of Manchester. The hotel opened in July 2021 and has already been dubbed as one of the hottest new hotels in the UK.



The cedar-clad retreat cabins

The Tawny Wildwood Huts



The Tawny prides itself on being the first 'deconstructed' hotel in the UK, essentially merging all of the best bits of a hotel and rolling it into one fabulous destination. Set in over 70 acres, the hotel boasts five lakes, a recent spa partnership with Gaia Spa, located in the hotel's thatched cottage, and luxurious accommodation options, from hillside treehouses to cedar-clad retreat cabins – there really is something for everyone at The Tawny.

Pop on your wellies (the hotel has some if you forget to pack yours!) and discover the picturesque grounds of The Tawny – we recommend exploring by foot but the hotel also offers bikes if you'd prefer to cycle your way around. We were assured that most guests head to The Tawny to simply 'do nothing' (that was exactly our plan, too!) But if you're keen to explore then take a dip in the hotel's heated outdoor pool, a guided yoga class or pre-order a picnic. Oh, and keep an eye out for the hidden ping-pong table for a quick game!



Hayley on her UK tour

We were fortunate to spend two nights in The Tawny's newest and most luxurious accommodation offering; The Retreat Suites. The suites are eight new cedar-clad cabins launched in August this year and inside you'll find a sunken bathtub and super-king size bed, with windows framing the breathtaking views and out on the terrace, as well as an outdoor spa bath for wildlife watching and star gazing.

We dined at The Plumicorn restaurant during our stay and enjoyed the most exquisite meal. The menu is ever-changing based on the chef's passion for seasonal produce. I enjoyed the duck and my partner Ben ordered the lobster - delicious! We found ourselves back at The Plumicorn for breakfast before we hit the road onto the next leg of our road trip; so it was a latte and pancakes with natural yoghurt and fresh berries to kick start the day.

\* One night's stay at The Tawny starts from £230 in the Wildwood Huts, £360 in the Lookout, £400 in the Boathouses, £420 in the Treehouses and £560 in a Retreat suite, based on two sharing and inclusive of bed and breakfast. To find out more, visit [thetawny.co.uk](http://thetawny.co.uk)

### Day 3 & 4: Cynefin Retreats, Hereford

Cynefin (pronounced kin-ev-in) is a Welsh word with no direct English translation, meaning 'rooted in place', somewhere we instinctively belong. From the heart of rural Staffordshire, we set off on a two-and-a-half hour journey south to Hereford. Located on the Welsh border, destination number two saw us checking into Cynefin Retreats for two nights. If you're looking to switch off for a few days, then look no further than Cynefin Retreats; set amongst woodland you'll be able to soak up the silence. The Luxe-Pod and Luxe-Lodges really are the ultimate luxury escape surrounded by nature.

If you're looking for a romantic retreat then the Luxe Pods are for you, cosy, and intimate, yet beautifully designed with a log burner, fully equipped kitchen, hot tub on the deck and walk-in shower - these pods offer luxury, charm and escapism. On our first night, we ordered takeaway pizza to the Pod, lit the fire and played cards whilst the rain came down – it truly was a magical night to remember; the perfect place to get cosy and soak up some quality time as a couple!

The Luxe Lodges are the newest addition to Cynefin and each offer two spacious bedrooms making them perfect for friends, families, or if you're just after a little more space. In the lodges you'll find a super-king bed (and a twin bed in the second bedroom), a private decking with a hot tub, BBQ grill and fire pit, a standalone bathtub and a separate shower. These beautiful timber-clad lodges nestle seamlessly into their lush surroundings, offering a tranquil retreat.

We recommend spending half a day browsing the stunning market town of Hay-On-Wye, less than a 10-minute drive from Cynefin Retreats. Dubbed the book town of the UK, Hay-on-Wye houses over 30 bookstores. Stop off for some lunch at the eclectic The Old Electric Shop for some delicious vegetarian food

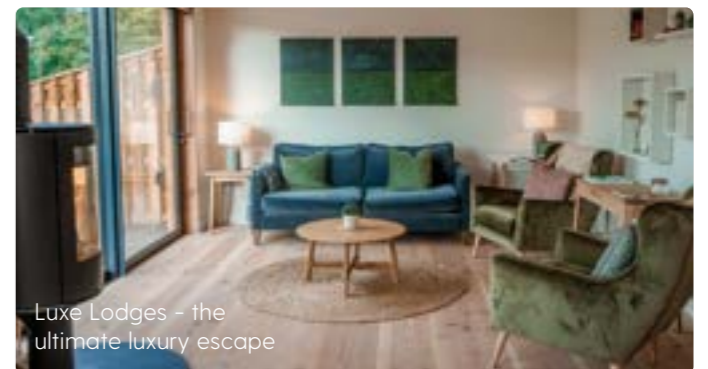
From Hereford, make sure you cross the border into South



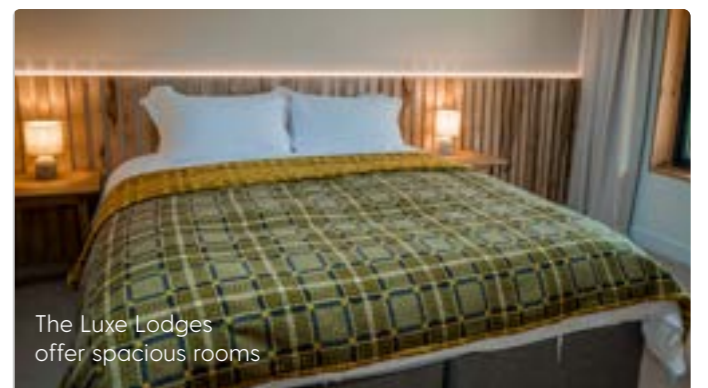
Hay-on-Wye



Luxe Pods at the Cynefin Retreats



Luxe Lodges - the ultimate luxury escape



The Luxe Lodges offer spacious rooms

## Need to know:

We were fortunate enough to set off on our road trip in a Jeep Wrangler which truly was the perfect car for country roads, the Wrangler now enhanced with state-of-the-art technology and inner refinement means that it's just as comfortable on the road as off. Our model also had a Tentbox on top, which allows you to camp on top of the car under the stars – the perfect addition for the adventurers out there!

\* For more information on Jeep, visit [jeep.co.uk](http://jeep.co.uk)



Wales to explore the breathtaking Brecon Beacons National Park. We climbed Pen-Y-Fan; the highest peak in South Wales. The views from the top were stunning, even on a cloudy day. Just make sure you take the easy path, not the hard trail, as it's very advanced to the 886m peak. Once you've completed your climb, head into Brecon for some delicious food at the Cat Soup Kitchen - I'd recommend the chicken burger with Korean Mayo.

\* One night's stay at Cynefin Retreats starts at £182 in the Luxe Pods. To find out more about Cynefin Luxe Pods and the Luxe Lodges, visit [cynefinretreats.com](http://cynefinretreats.com)

### Day 5 & 6: Palé Hall, Bala, North Wales

After two wonderful days of exploring South Wales and the Hereford border, it was time to pack up and hit the road again in our Jeep Wrangler. This time we were heading North to Palé Hall; a 5\* luxurious hotel on the edge of the Snowdonia National Park.

Set on 16 acres, Palé Hall is a destination for exploration, relaxation and indulging your senses. Palé Hall offers each guest a personal, home-from-home experience where the service is second to none. The hotel will go above and beyond to ensure you have a magical stay; whether they're packing up your picnic for a day of exploring or delivering your morning newspaper to your room, no stone goes left unturned.

When you first approach from the tree-lined driveway and Palé Hall comes into view, the sight of the grand historic house will take your breath away. You'll be met by a chauffeur offering valet service whilst you check in, then offered complimentary refreshments whilst your bags are being taken to your room.

We spent two nights in the 'Ferne' Garden suite, with its stand-alone roll-top bath, walk-in shower, spacious bedroom, coffee machine and luxury towelling bathrobes, the suites offer an air of luxury. The Welsh countryside-themed décor will have you captivated when you step through the threshold, with calming greens and prints inspired by nature – the suites really capture tranquillity that reflects their surroundings.

We would highly recommend dining at the hotel during your stay. Its acclaimed three rosette and Michelin green star fine dining restaurant features signature dishes from Palé Hall's head chef, Gareth Stevenson. Rising star Gareth showcases his creativity and skill through the fine dining menu. We experienced the exquisite eight-course-tasting menu, accompanied by the wine flight served by the hotel's sommelier. Our experience lasted several hours and was an evening we will truly cherish; the food, atmosphere and experience were out of this world.

One of the recommended trails from Palé Hall is to Dolgoch Falls, located just an hour's drive from the hotel. Dolgoch Falls are a series of three picturesque waterfalls located in Gwynedd, North Wales. Enjoy a slow walk around the falls, take a picnic to eat by the stream then finish off with a dip in the falls (cold, but oh so worth it!)

\* One night's stay at Palé Hall starts at £254. For more information about booking your stay, fine dining experience or afternoon tea at Palé Hall, visit [palehall.co.uk](http://palehall.co.uk)

### Day 7: The Lakes by Yoo, The Cotswolds

From North Wales it was time to pack up the Jeep for the last leg of our journey; a drive South East took us to The Cotswolds



The historic house at Palé Hall



The calming interiors are inspired by nature



Pen-Y-Fan

to spend our last night at The Lakes by Yoo; this chic estate is often dubbed the Hamptons of the UK.

Spread across 850 acres, the estate boasts freshwater lakes, meadows and woodlands to explore. Whether you're looking to snuggle up by the fire with a good book and make the most of switching off, or, if you're a slightly more adventurous type, The Lakes by Yoo offer water sports, workshops, fishing and outdoor activities. This high-end estate offers both rental residences and luxury homes if you're looking for a more permanent getaway fixture.

If you're looking to unwind during your stay then The Orchard Spa is for you, featuring a 17-metre swimming pool, gym, sauna and treatment rooms. Designed by award-winning architects, The Orchard Spa really does capture the very essence of nature and tranquillity.



Luxurious  
bathrooms at  
The Lakes by Yoo



Lakeside views  
from the  
private balcony

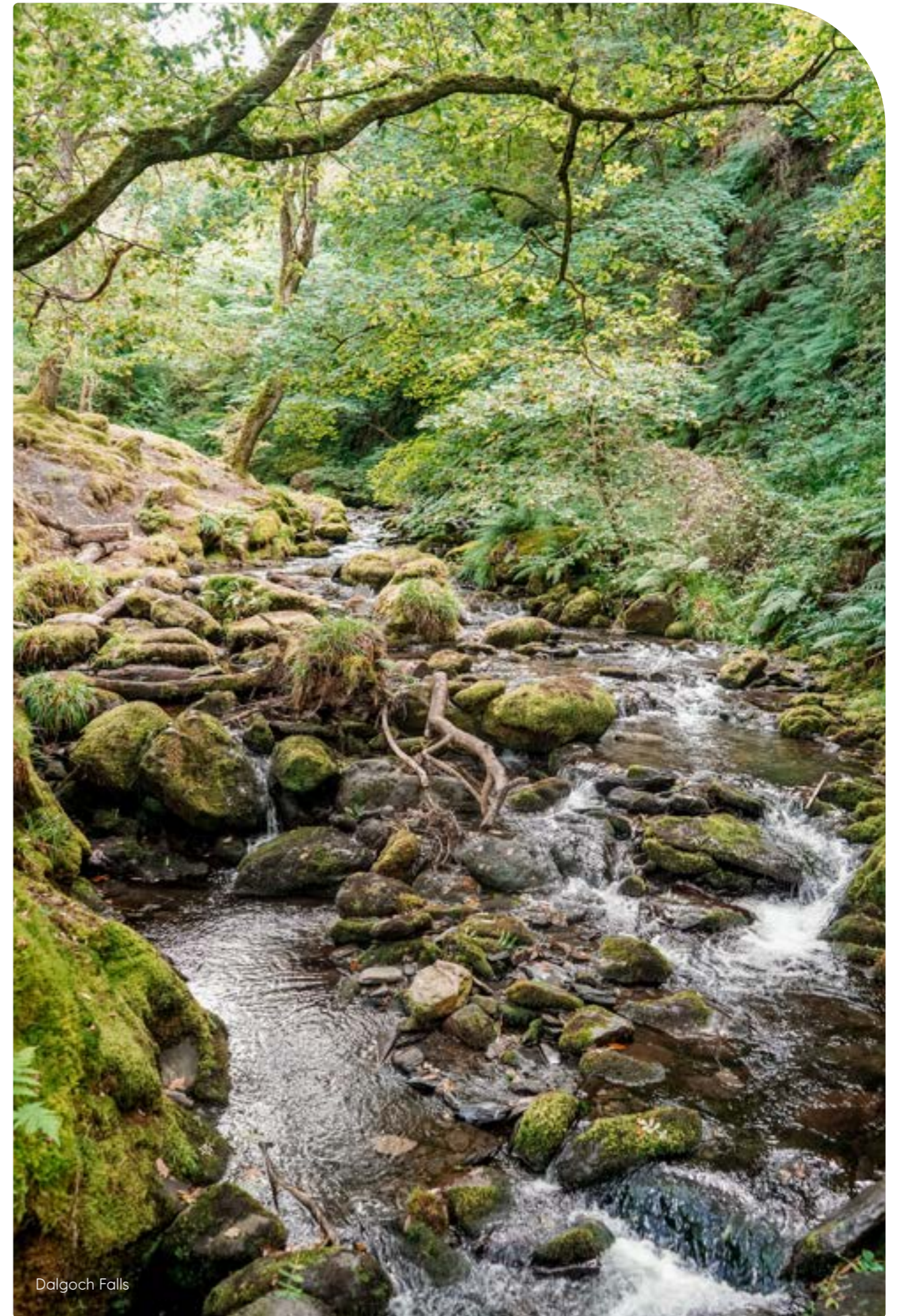


Casual dining  
at Elsa's

We had the pleasure of spending the last night of our road trip in a Lakeside Apartment at The Lakes by Yoo; these luxurious apartments offer three bedrooms, lakeside views from a private balcony, as well as a large soaking bathtub, super-king bed (two of the bedrooms offer twins which can be made up as a super king or two singles) and a fully-equipped kitchen.

Grab a bite to eat at Elsa's, The Lake's casual dining offering complete with an outdoor seating area, log fires and stunning views of the lake. The rustic-yet-luxe interiors will have you feeling cosy and at home in no time and food is served by renowned chef Alex Nutt. Expect to find a relaxed menu using local ingredients, delicious snacks, and a bar that satisfies both your wine and barista coffee needs. \*

\* One night's stay at The Lakes by Yoo starts at £255. To inquire about your stay at The Lakes by Yoo, visit [thelakesbyyoo.com](http://thelakesbyyoo.com)



Dalgoch Falls