



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: THE FOXHUNTER, ITS CHEF MATT TEBBUTT BEHIND THE STOVE AND SOME OF HIS CREATIONS; THE GRAND EXTERIOR OF CANNIZARO HOUSE AND PLUSH INTERIORS; THE IVY-CLAD DORMY HOUSE

where to stay

GOURMET BOLTHOLES

Andrew Richardson, Marc Millon and Rachel Truman enjoy the flavours of summer at these charming escapes around the UK

DORMY HOUSE BROADWAY, WORCS

Exposed Cotswold stone walls in distinctively mellow, cinder toffee hues; deep, rich, oak-panelled rooms evocative of a regal age; and undulating countryside extending across the Worcestershire plains – arriving at Dormy House Hotel is a life-affirming experience. Rooms are cosy and comfortably appointed, with delightful views to thrill the senses. The real draw, however, is the inventive and precise cuisine of head chef Andrew Troughton. His is a Michelin-starred restaurant waiting to happen. Elegant starters and mains are presented in Picasso-esque pictorial fashion, making them almost too pretty to eat. Sensational desserts – such as lemon tart with absurdly good raspberry ice cream – are the real highlights.

Foodie diversion Broadway Deli on the high street is food paradise, with Cotswold Gold rapeseed oil, Bramley & Gage gins and Gorsehill Abbey cheese.

Come here for gourmandising in a setting of pure serenity.

Details Doubles from £170, including breakfast. Dinner around £35. Willersey Hill, Broadway, Worcestershire WR12 7LF (01386 852711; dormyhouse.co.uk)

CANNIZARO HOUSE WIMBLEDON, LONDON

A 300-year-old mansion set in its own 38 acres of parkland – who would think you're just outside central London? Minutes from Wimbledon Village, this country house combines period elegance and quirky contemporary decor. Cannizaro House is a serious dining destination, too, not just for residents but Londoners alike. Come for a light lunch on the terrace followed by a stroll in the beautiful gardens; by night, feast in the period dining room on chef Christian George's classically prepared, ingredients-led menu. Fish comes up direct from the West Country, sea vegetables from Wales, and meats from nearby farms. Enjoy soft-shelled crab, crispy fried, served with corn succotash and chorizo oil. Short ribs of local beef are slow-braised for 36 hours until deliciously succulent.

Foodie diversion Charterery deli on Wimbledon Park Road has all you need to picnic on the park or common.

Come here for croquet and Pimms on the lawn.

Details Doubles from £170 with breakfast. Dinner from £30. West Side Common, Wimbledon SW19 4UE (020 8879 1464; www.cannizarohouse.com)

THE FOXHUNTER ABERGAVENNEY, WALES

This green and undulating pocket of Wales is becoming quite the food lover's destination thanks to Abergavenny's famous food festival and a cluster of seriously good restaurants: Shaun Hill's Walnut Tree, Stephen Terry's The Hardwick and James Sommerin's The Crown at Whitebrook. Matt Tebbutt's The Foxhunter is very much part of this pack. When he's not starring on the small screen, he's doing clever things with Welsh produce and wild food in the restaurant with rooms that he runs with wife Lisa. Hidden away in the hamlet of Nantyduffy, enthusiastic diners fill the spacious stone building, which is smart yet rustic, with flagstone floors, wood stoves and starched tablecloths. The Tebbutts have created a lovely atmosphere, with staff stopping to natter to customers as they provide effortlessly efficient service.

It might be Matt's celebrity that attracts some people but it is his non-fussy, full flavoured and seasonally in-tune cooking that brings them back for more. A vast bowl of black-bean soup with crunchy pieces of pancetta and a dollop of crème fraîche was utterly delicious, while the skate wing melted in the mouth – its brown butter sauce, dotted with capers and sweet nuggets of brown shrimp, added a salty piquancy. End on a high by digging into an Eton Mess, which could hide plump new-season cherries.

Keep your eyes peeled for one of Matt's suppliers, who often walks in with a basket brimming with assorted mushrooms and tufts of wild greens. Throughout the year, expert forager Raoul Van Den Broucke supplies the kitchen with wild ingredients and leads guests on foraging expeditions too, returning to The Foxhunter for Matt to whip up the day's pickings into a sublime feast. Stay in one of the two tiny but gorgeous cottages (a two-bed and one-bed) just next door so you won't have far to stagger after your generously portioned feast. Kitchens are kitted out with all you need to cook up your own breakfast – eat on the patio as you look out over the lush, green fields and plan a picnic nearby.

Foodie diversion Buy Welsh cheeses at McBlains of Usk. Or, if you are around on the last Thursday of the month, head to the farmers' market in Abergavenny's historic market hall.

Come here for a walk on the wild side in Wales.

Details Nantyduffy, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire NP7 9DN (01873 881101; thefoxhunter.com). Cottages from £145 per night, including breakfast provisions. Dinner from £25. □

Prices quoted for meals are based on three courses without wine, unless otherwise stated