

HOUSES + GARDENS + FOOD + LIFESTYLE

COUNTRY HOMES

& INTERIORS

The perfect country Christmas

GORGEOUS LOOKS, INSPIRATION AND GIFTS EVERYONE WILL LOVE



32 PAGES OF WELCOMING WINTER HOMES FILLED WITH IDEAS



CLASSIC COUNTRY MENU

Chestnuts, goose, mulled wine and more

COME & STAY!

Finishing touches for guest rooms

MAKE YOUR GARDEN GLOW

Sparkling ways with lights & lanterns

FESTIVE TRADITIONS

made easy

HOMEMADE PRESENTS + ADVENT CALENDARS + ECO TAGS & CARDS

US\$8/AUS\$9.95/NZ\$12.95
RECALL 03/17/09



DECEMBER 2009 £3.60

OUT & ABOUT

BEST PLACES TO GO THINGS TO DO

CHRISTMAS MARKETS



SHOP OF THE MONTH

One of our online favourites, **Lavender & Sage**, has opened a new shop in Berwick, East Sussex, packed with the traditional French country style you'd expect. 'We're excited about opening the shop on our farm,' says Mayke Hogestijn. The best buys include china and soft furnishings and decorations, such as the wreath, below, £11. *Lavender & Sage, Berwick Court Farm, Alfriston Road, Berwick, East Sussex BN26 5QS, 0845 601 0522, lavenderandsage.co.uk (check website for opening times).*



Christmas in Bath.

WE'VE FOUND THREE OF THE BEST

Bath The area around Bath Abbey and the Roman baths is transformed when more than 100 wooden chalets, teeming with handmade gifts and festive produce, open for the Bath Christmas Market, 26th November to 6th December. Visit bathchristmasmarket.co.uk.

Leeds Experience an authentic German Christkindelmarkt in Leeds, when the speciality food market and funfair comes to town, 13th November to 20th December. Call 0113 395 0891, festiveleeds.com.

Caerphilly A castle jester will add to the seasonal ambience of Caerphilly's Medieval Christmas Fayre. Set in the castle grounds and town centre, traditional crafts, medieval goods and a treasure hunt are promised over the weekend of 12th to 13th December (admission to castle events, £3.70 for adults). Call 029 2088 0011, caerphilly.gov.uk/christmas. For more events visit christmasmarkets.com.

FEEL-GOOD HOTEL

THE OLDE BELL, HURLEY, BERKSHIRE

This 12th-century coaching inn has recently been refurbished and offers a cosy yet stylishly understated welcome.

THE LOCATION Tucked away close to the River Thames and only an hour from central London.

THE WOW FACTOR The inn, which partly dates from 1135, has all the charms you would expect, including low beams and sloping floors. In the revamped bedrooms an almost medieval simplicity prevails, but the comforts are decidedly modern, with classic mid 20th-century furniture, blissful beds and indulgent bathing. Head for the snug for a cup of tea or a glass of something stronger, then get cosy in a high-backed settle in the dining room to sample delicious dishes made using local ingredients.

THE COST Rooms from £99 upwards.

THE ADDRESS The Olde Bell Inn, High Street, Hurley, Berkshire. SL6 5LX, 01628 825881, theoldebell.co.uk.



ON COURSE... GIFT WRAPPING

For the best-dressed presents under the tree treat yourself to a one-day course in Lincolnshire. Expert wrapper Jane Means shares her secrets with small groups who learn to tackle awkward shapes and fancy bows. The courses on 1st and 2nd December cost £75 with lunch. Call 01522 548900, janemeans.co.uk.



SANTA RIDES Svr.co.uk Take the Santa Herald train at Kidderminster, Worcestershire, on the Severn Valley Railway. Bluebell-railway.co.uk Board the Victorian Christmas train from Horsted Keynes, West Sussex. Watercressline.co.uk Steam through Hampshire with Father Christmas.