

The Olde Bell Inn, Hurley

In some ways, The Olde Bell Inn (10 minutes from Henley-on-Thames) simply reflects the boutique-ing and gastro-ing of the traditional British coaching inn. Rooms that were once fusty and stale-smelling now feature walk-in monsoon showers and Aesop toiletries. But designer Ilse Crawford has managed to assemble private and public spaces that sit easily with the history of this wonky Tudor building – some parts of which actually date as far back as 1135. In the dining room, banquettes are brightened with geometric-print Welsh blankets, and contemporary Thonet bentwood chairs are matched with Matthew Hilton for Ercol's birch Windsors, produced in High Wycombe. The food, by chef Damian Broom, which, of course, makes use of locally sourced ingredients, is terrific. *High Street, T 01628 825 881, www.theoldebell.co.uk*

