



WROTHAM, KENT THE BULL INN HOTEL

If you're partial to dipped ceilings and a squeaky floorboard or two, you'll love the authenticity of the refurbished rooms at this quaint inn dating back to the 14th century. The décor is boutique chic but the rooms are sympathetically designed to fit in with the old wooden beams and original fireplaces. The place feels old and enigmatic but the menus are bang up to date, with dishes like Hartley Bottom lamb served with fresh Kentish produce. Owners Martin and Lygia are big fans of local food provenance and it shows in everything from the cask ales to the cheeseboard.

Double rooms from £79 (thebullinnhotel.com).

3 by the sea

WHITSTABLE, KENT THE PEARL FISHER

Postcard-worthy beach huts, heaven-sent sunsets and fresher-than-fresh seafood make this laid-back but stylish town a perfect retreat for two. Wander the high street popping into tempting tearooms and quirky galleries then stop off at the harbour stalls dishing up cockles, winkles, scampi and oysters (the local speciality). For dinner, book a waterfront table upstairs at the Pearson's Arms and indulge in outstanding gastro-pub fare before heading home to The Pearl Fisher – a home-from-home B&B with themed rooms (The Paris, The Windsor...) just a short stroll from the town centre.

Doubles from £95 (thepearlfisher.com).

LOOE, CORNWALL BARCLAY HOUSE

Perched on the cliffs, Mediterranean-style, Barclay House sits above the historic twin villages of East and West Looe, which straddle the estuary just as it empties into the sea. At this whitewashed Victorian villa with four-star cred, you'll have the best views of the river, harbour and countryside, plus all the ingredients for honeymoon bliss – think heated pool, magical gardens and a choice of three eateries on-site. If you manage to drag yourselves away from the property, laze on the sandy beach below, hit the water for a boating adventure, or simply hop from pub to pub and finish your day with a quay-side pasty.

Rooms from £105 (barclayhouse.co.uk).

CLEY NEXT THE SEA, NORFOLK CLEY WINDMILL

For rustic charm and natural beauty, you'd be hard pressed to find a spot more stunning than Cley, set on the North Norfolk Heritage Coast. Wildlife enthusiasts flock here for the nature reserve and breathtaking salt marshes, while those looking for a unique place to hole up come for Cley Windmill, a 300-year-old landmark that's been converted into a cosy-cool B&B. You'll fall for the roaring lounge fire, wood-beamed ceilings, and sweeping views. For maximum romance, book the Wheel Room, with four-poster oak bed and stunning views from the top of the windmill.

Rooms from £89 (cleywindmill.co.uk).

HURLEY, BERKSHIRE THE OLDE BELL

The rooms here are simple; all basics and barely any furnishings. But don't be fooled by the lack of public displays of accessories. Luxe lovers will feel at home with discreet touches like Roberts radios, quality throws and crisp linens in the Ilse Crawford-designed suites (as well as monsoon showers, roll-top baths and Aesop pampering treats). From the wellies in reception to pork pies at the bar, this coaching inn – dating back to 1135 – is uber cool. And with subtly-luxe bedrooms, and past guests including Elizabeth Taylor, who says you can't have glamour with your rustic chic?

Rooms from £95 (theoldebells.co.uk).



LAVENHAM, SUFFOLK THE SWAN AND THE GREAT HOUSE

You don't have to be a history lover to appreciate the medieval magnificence of Lavenham, a perfectly preserved Tudor town with cobbled streets and pretty squares a-plenty. Quaint tea rooms and antique shops housed in heavily-beamed, candy-coloured cottages line the streets and you'll feel tipsy before you've raised a toast as you walk by gravity-defying guild halls and crooked chimneys. Set your suitcases down in your very own piece of the past at the timber-framed Swan Hotel (Claudia Schiffer's wedding venue of choice) or head to the heart of the village and mix gourmet cuisine with chic rooms at The Great House (above).

Double rooms at The Swan from £200 per night (theswanatlavenham.com); rooms at the Great House from £225 per night (greathouse.co.uk), both on B&B basis.