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The Olde Bell, Berkshire, United Kingdom

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This rustic and cosy inn dating back to 1135 has charm and character creeping out of every nook and cranny. It was revamped by Soho House designer Ilse Crawford a few years ago with a palette of Farrow & Ball colours, sheepskin rugs and woollen blankets. A 30-minute train ride away from London makes it the perfect getaway from the Big Smoke.

The bedrooms mix the original features of wooden beam and floors with traditional English furniture and tweeds, along with modern pieces such as Ercol Windsor chairs and Roberts DAB radios. Easy to see why back in the 50s, Hollywood icons such as Elizabeth Taylor, Errol Flynn and Mae West would flock here for stylish weekend breaks!

Packing tips

An empty stomach, and a book to read in the gorgeous claw-foot roll-top bath. Don't worry if you forget your bubble bath as all rooms and bathrooms are kitted out with oodles of Aesop smellies.

Eating

If the cosy interiors haven't inspired you yet, then the food certainly will. The restaurant is overseen by chef Warren Geraghty, where hearty locally-sourced food provides a very British menu. Warm, freshly baked breads make your mouth water before you've even glanced at the delicious dishes on offer. Barbecues are thrown in the beautiful garden during the summer.

Activities

Henley-on-Thames is a stone's throw away from The Olde Bell and with mountain bikes available to hire, there's no excuse not to explore the beautiful surrounding countryside. The Thames path passes through nearby Marlow, and boat trips can also be organised. Just remember to pack a picnic!

Contact The Olde Bell, High Street, Hurley (nr. Henley-on-Thames) Berkshire, SL6 5LX. T: 01628 825 881; E: oldebellreception@coachinginn.co.uk

www.theoldebell.co.uk

Rates Rooms from £139.

By Lucy Halfhead

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