

The Grove, Watford, Hertfordshire

Just outside Watford, the Grove feels like a rural oasis close to London. While the main hotel is grade II listed (albeit with a contemporary wing), the Sequoia Spa is a lavish modern complex in the gardens, with marble floors, twinkly lights and a 22m adults-only indoor pool. Leave your offspring at the Ofsted-registered crèche (or with a partner at the family pool) and enjoy the spa's signature treatment, the two-hour Orangery Experience, which exfoliates, wraps and massages you (£190 for two hours).

Details B&B doubles cost from £259 (01923 296010, thegrove.co.uk)

Boringdon Hall, near Plymouth, Devon

Last summer a state-of-the-art Gaia spa arrived at this 16th-century manor house hotel. It's as if a spaceship has landed at the back — all glass, blond wood and slate. Inside, there's a pool next to a hydrotherapy area, which leads to an



Hartwell House, Buckinghamshire

This grand Georgian residence is in a quiet, sylvan corner of the city, and the five-star hotel's newly opened spa — the first UK spa by the French cosmetics brand L'Occitane — is inspired by the ample flora that surrounds it. The spa is small (with minuscule changing rooms), but it offers all the services you would expect — fluffy robes galore, an elliptical steam room and sauna, and a heated pool with a relaxation area overlooking the gardens. The signature treatment, the Verbena Relaxing Massage, is 60 minutes of soothing heaven from head to toes. The hotel is also home to Bath's only Michelin-starred restaurant, and has rooms in muted tones with the feel of a modern stately home, with tweed upholstery and four-poster beds.

Details Half-board doubles, including a treatment, cost from £480 a night (01225 331922, thebathpriory.co.uk)

Brimstone Hotel, Langdale Estate, Cumbria

If you're looking for a seriously sexy spa and hotel for loved-up couples, this is the

Book the Bubble Private Spa for two, at £250 for three hours, with 90 minutes of treatments each. Then head back to the hotel's reading room for the free snacks and drinks or out to the pub on the estate.

Details B&B doubles cost from £275 (01539 438062, brimstonehotel.co.uk)

Ragdale Hall, near Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire

The spa here feels like a water park for adults, with a pool complex that is in a league of its own. As well as two large indoor pools and one outdoors, the thermal spa has a beautiful indoor-outdoor tropical pool with a waterfall and a candle pool. There are more than 200 treatments, from the normal (an Elemis deep-tissue massage, £71 for 55 minutes), to the more esoteric (Angel card reading, £40 for 40 minutes). The rooms are elegantly proportioned, with luxurious bathrooms and warm minimalist decor.

Details A two-night midweek break starts at £325pp, including meals and one 50-minute treatment (01664 433000, ragdalehall.co.uk)

New Park Manor, New Forest, Hampshire

This chic, family-friendly haven in the heart of the New Forest underwent a £2 million revamp last summer, including a significant upgrade of the spa. Treatments — in four stylish suites — use Elemis products and include super-relaxing freestyle massages (from £40), wraps and more than ten facials. There's also a swish café/bar, heated indoor pool and a cool decked area, with hot tub and great views of the forest. New Park Manor's crèche and baby-minding services make it a magnet for parents in need of some quality R&R —



Isle of Eriska Hotel

Expect traditional decor in the 16 main hotel rooms, with beautiful woodwork and tapestry-style fabrics. There are five one-bedroom spa suites and luxury Hilltop Reserves with their own hot tubs too. The spa, set in the former stables, has a 17m indoor pool that opens on to a sheltered garden. It has Ishga treatments using local seaweed.

Details Three nights in a Hilltop Reserve with one dinner and two hours of treatments costs from £499pp (01631 720371, eriska-hotel.co.uk)

Compiled by Jane Knight, Tom Chesshyre and Ben Clatworthy

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Hartwell House, near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire

This stunning stately home is a glorious hotchpotch of Jacobean and Georgian architecture set in 90 acres of Capability Brown-inspired grounds. Public rooms have damask-covered walls and extravagant plaster ceilings. Bedrooms in the main house have top-quality chintz and not a whisper of misplaced modernity, while rooms in 18th-century stables offer cosier charm. The spa uses Aromatherapy Associates products and has an attractive pool area channelling a Roman vibe. Massages, wraps and scrubs are offered, as is a luxurious Rose Infinity Facial (£76.50 for 55 minutes). **Details** B&B doubles cost from £205 (01296 747444, hartwell-house.com)

Fistral Beach Hotel, Newquay

It's all about the location here. The 71-room, four-star Fistral Beach Hotel sits beside one of Britain's best surfing beaches. The spa facilities are tiptop; there are nine treatment rooms, a gym, an 11m pool, a whirlpool, steam room and sauna, and a range of facials, massages and body wraps, Ayurvedic and pregnancy treatments (try the 55-minute Essential Fistral treatment — a back and neck massage plus a mini facial for £65). It's laid-back, adults only and is popular with surfers. The rooms are all white walls and blond wood, and have the perfect finishing touch: a magnificent view of the bay. **Details** B&B doubles start at £75, but it is worth paying an extra £40 a night to upgrade to a sea view (01637 852221, fistralbeachhotel.co.uk)

The spa at Brimstone Hotel, Cumbria



outdoor hot tub. Treatments include facials using jade (£90 for 60 minutes) and the Gaia Crystal Therapy (£225 for 120 minutes). Some rooms have four-poster beds and clawfoot baths. Healthy food is served in the Spatisserie, or there's a more formal restaurant with a seafood slant. **Details** A one-night B&B spa break with one 60-minute treatment each costs from £199 a couple (01752 344455, boringdonhall.co.uk)

The Priory, Bath, Somerset

place to go. Opened late last year in a separate timber and stone building, Brimstone Spa has a series of sauna and steam cabins with a recommended circuit, as well as an indoors/outdoors vitality pool and outdoors Finnish sauna. The spa joins the hip 16-room hotel on the Langdale Estate, with a posh ski-chalet feel to it, loads of open fires, exposed brickwork and timber floorboards. Try the leg massage, for walkers after hiking on the fells, or one of the blissful treatments using Pure Lakes products (£85 for 55 minutes). Or

but it's popular with couples too. Food ranges from great steaks in the Stag restaurant to child-friendly dishes.

Details Doubles cost from £115 a night, with family suites from £235 (01590 623467, newparkmanorhotel.co.uk)

Rockliffe Hall, near Darlington, Co Durham

Set in 375 acres in the Tees Valley, the 61-bedroom Rockliffe Hall is a lavishly restored Victorian mansion. Choose between the spacious rooms in the Old Hall, which are all different, with high ceilings and traditional furnishings, and rooms in the modern extension, the New Hall, which is adjacent to the spa. The spa is one of the largest in the country, offering a "journey" of experiences designed to boost the immune system, and give you an instant pick-up. There's a 20m pool, sauna, steam and ice rooms, and a recently added Spa Garden, with an outdoor infinity pool and hot tub. There are restorative massages, from £90 for 60 minutes. For an extra £25 a night you can take your dog to enjoy the restorative powers of the countryside. **Details** Two nights' B&B, including "check-in to check-out" spa passes and a two-hour Spa Garden session, costs from £290 for two, using the promo code WINTER (01325 729999, rockliffehall.com)

Isle of Eriska Hotel, Argyll

Escape to this private island getaway, a short drive from Oban on the west coast of Scotland, with its elegant hotel and golf course, log fires, Michelin-starred restaurant and oak-panelled whisky bar.

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For longer reviews of these spas visit thetimes.co.uk/spaguide