

# INSIDE **H**otels

**Photo opportunity**  
A focus on making  
Instagram moments

**Grand designs**  
Michael Caines  
on creating  
Lympstone Manor

## **Natural high**

How hotel gardens are fertile ground  
for boosting revenue

September 2017

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**9 The Goring**  
**Victoria, London**

The garden at the five-red-AA-star, 69-bed-room Goring hotel is a green oasis in central London. The garden, which is bigger than the centre court at Wimbledon, is the largest privately owned hotel garden in the capital.

Managing director David Morgan-Hewitt confirms that the garden-facing rooms command a premium. "None of the other five-star luxury hotels in London has such an oasis as part of their facilities," he says. "While we have never quantified the value of our garden, most of our guests are extremely willing to pay premiums to have a garden view. We could sell the garden view rooms many times over. Therefore, while it is impossible to say what value in monetary terms the garden brings to the Goring, in terms of differentiating us, it is priceless." ▶



**MINI-TREATS**



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proportion depending on the season. Three egg houses (chicken, duck and quail) produce more than 11,000 eggs for the restaurant each year. Waste recycling initiatives – such as cooking oil reused in the bird feeder balls – win the property further green credentials.

### 5 Askham Hall

Penrith, Cumbria

The gardens at Askham are Grade II-listed and combine traditional design with contemporary innovations, including a double herbaceous border, formal lawns, woodland and meadows, and kitchen gardens that supply the Kitchen Garden café, all overseen by three full-time gardeners. Co-owner Marie-Louisa Raeburn says the gardens do not make money as such; however, they do raise the profile of the hotel and draw people to the 15-bedroom property, thereafter enticing them to stay, enjoy a meal or hold an event there.

### 6 Ston Easton Park

Near Bath, Somerset

Ston Easton Park's head gardener Steve Hargreaves and vegetable gardener Dale Toten oversee the Victorian kitchen garden and surrounding parkland. The four-red-AA-star, 23-bedroom hotel's 36 acres were designed by Humphry Repton, the last great English landscape designer of the 18th century, and regarded as the successor to Capability Brown, the nation's most prolific landscape architect.

Events are held throughout the year, including picnics, outdoor cinema screenings attracting over 100 people, and flower arranging workshops, as well as its quirky annual loofah harvest, for which guests pay £45 for lunch and the chance to pick their own loofah.

### 7 Bodysgallen Hall

Llandudno, Conwy, North Wales

Bodysgallen Hall's gardens have attracted attention and business as a result of featuring in BBC One's *Glorious Gardens from Above* in 2014, bringing in visitors from the locality and also further afield.

Head gardener Robert Owen has worked at the four-red-AA-star, 31-bedroom hotel for over 35 years and led the restoration of the 200-acre grounds. The garden features traditional rose gardens, rockeries and a herb parterre, as well as a few surprises, including a gothic tower and an obelisk. Bodysgallen Hall was gifted to the National Trust in 2008 and is operated by Historic House Hotels.

### 8 Hartwell House

Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire

The Grade I-listed, four-red-AA-star, 46-bedroom Hartwell House – one of two sister properties to Bodysgallen Hall – is surrounded by 90 acres of gardens and parkland designed by Capability Brown and boasts a mile-long avenue of 234 lime trees planted in 1830.

The hotel runs garden events in partnership with the Royal Horticultural Society, where 20-30 society members pay £35, with some booking a stay at the hotel. Richard Jones, Hartwell's head gardener, has been with the business for nearly 10 years.



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