

King of the CASTLE

Stay in a little bit of history – for style and opulence for all the family



Five-star luxury

Lough Eske Castle in Ireland is a five-star castle hotel located on a secluded lakeside estate just outside Donegal Town, with a rich history dating back to the 1400s. The historic storybook setting of the castle offers great hospitality and comfort and has been lovingly restored to blend its historic past with a dash of contemporary elegance.

It's also the ideal base for exploring the rugged beauty of Ireland's scenic Northwest region and Donegal's Wild Atlantic Way, offering an authentic experience away from the typical tourist spots. Cycling, horse riding and fishing – the adventurous opportunities are endless! And after a full day of activities, head back to the Solis Spa for a well-deserved pampering session.

- From £220 per night, for a deluxe room including breakfast, in April. Book online at solishotels.com/lougheskecastle



Romantic getaway

Located in the picturesque village of Amberley in the beautiful West Sussex countryside, Amberley Castle is a unique luxury hotel steeped in over 900 years of history. Within its medieval walls the Brownsword family has created a picturesque retreat, which seamlessly blends ancient architecture and history with modern design and contemporary cuisine that's cooked to the highest standards. On the doorstep of the South Downs National Park, with its green rolling pastures, open spaces, ancient woodlands and river valleys, Amberley Castle is perfectly placed for an array of outdoor pursuits, including walking, cycling and horse riding – you'll even find an 18-hole putting course. Each bedroom offers medieval architecture with modern home-from-home comforts.

- From £234 per night for a classic room for two in April, including full breakfast, book online at amberleycastle.co.uk



Family friendly

If you're after some luxe-living, boutique Chateau Les Carrasses in Languedoc, France, offers a stunning collection of self-catering villas with top-notch hotel-style facilities. Surrounded by vineyards and boasting spectacular views over the expansive grounds and countryside, it's perfect for both couples and families. Activities on site include flood-lit clay tennis courts, a boules pitch, volleyball and horse riding. Take advantage of the free bike hire on offer and head over to Haut-Languedoc national park, or try kayaking on the River Orb. For the adults,

there's a strong wine theme to the hotel with regular tasting sessions, tours and classes on winemaking available. The local area has lots to offer, but make the most of the beautiful chateau, with outdoor seating areas, or visit the stunning glass house where you can sit and order afternoon tea, or simply sunbathe around the infinity pool – each villa has its own private pool, too.

- For three-bedroom self-catering properties, from £130 per person for a three-night stay (villas sleep two to eight people) in April, visit lescarrasses.com to book. Fly direct to Montpellier from London Gatwick with an hour transfer to Les Carrasses.



Cultural calling

This former crusader's castle was once owned by one of Columbus' captains, but after sitting untouched for 80 years, it's now been transformed into a contemporary hotel with heaps of historical flair, a roof terrace, 17th century chapel, spacious herb-filled garden and sweeping views over the Catalan countryside. It's close enough to Girona for a weekend break, but works equally as well as a longer holiday to go cycling and walking around medieval villages, restaurant-hopping

and relaxing on the quiet beaches. Each room offers a stunning view from private balconies and comfy window seats, while the careful positioning of bathtubs offers a relaxing view, too. For days out take a trip to the Dali Triangle, the Costa Brava's hidden cultural gem, including the impressive Dali museum in Figueres.

- Prices available from £112 per room per night, based on two sharing a Tower Room on an accommodation-only basis in April. To book, visit i-escapes.com



Words: Zoe Bishop