

HOTELS • RESTAURANTS • GARDENS • GETAWAYS

ESCAPE

THE MODERN RETREAT

Swap poolside lounging for a week in the woods on Germany's Baltic coast, staying in one of the two Newhaus holiday homes designed by Berlin architect Herbert Hussmann. House Pine and House Sand are both equally magnificent – B&B Italia sofas, Minotti reading chairs and in-house saunas – and perfect for a relaxing escape. Waking up to the dappled light of a woodland morning will help to sooth many an urban worry.

From £190 per night (newhaus.de).





THREE MORE MODERN COUNTRYSIDE CABINS

1 Black&Bright, Isle of Møn, Denmark
Among the traditional 19th century farmhouses on the island is this sleek, black cabin, purpose built by Copenhagen-based architect Jan Henrik Jansen for holidaying in all year round. A woodburning stove keeps it cosy – but on a fine day, the floor-to-ceiling windows allow views across the sea to the horizon. From £685 per week (urlaubsarchitektur.de).

2 La Marmote Albergo Diffuso, Italy
This is a cross between a hotel and a small holiday village: check in to one of La Marmote's lodgings which are spread throughout the pretty mountain town of Paluzza. As well as traditional chocolate box chalets, there's Da Velio (above right), an eco-shed which runs off of solar energy and has amazing views of the Alps. From £34 per night (albergodiffusopaluzza.it).

3 Boxwood Retreat, Sussex, UK
Surrounded by mature chestnut, pine and oak trees, this six-person sanctuary with a steeply pitched roof is a contemporary take on the forest grottos of traditional fairy tales. But with the luxury of underfloor heating throughout. From £800 for a week (boxwood-retreat.co.uk).



NORTHERN POWERHOUSE

We're mad for Manchester. Here are three reasons to visit now!

The grass is greener. The City of Trees movement, which aims to plant a tree for every person in the city (that's three million) over the next 25 years, is now well underway (cityoftrees.org.uk).

There are new hot hotels. Top of the mini-breaker's list should be The Principal (right): a glorious Gothic revival building designed in 1891 by architect Alfred Waterhouse (also the brains behind London's Natural History Museum). It has been transformed by 3D Reid Architects and interior designer Michaelis Boyd, but the original Victorian tiling remains, as does the domed stained-glass ceiling above the lobby (doubles from £119 per night; theprincipalhotel.com). Meanwhile, on the riverside is five-star The Lowry, housed in a vast glass building. It has a clutch of extremely chic newly refreshed suites (right) by interiors practice Arney Fender Katsalidis. Expect to find lighting by Flos and Santa & Cole, fabrics by Rubelli and abstract artworks by Mancunian painter Alan Rankle (doubles from £169 per night; thelowryhotel.com).

It's bloom time at the Whitworth. There's no better month to check out the GROW project at the Whitworth Museum (far right). Wander around The Art Garden in the gallery's grounds. Funded by sales of Jo Malone's charity candle, the lovely 'Peony & Moss' (£46; jomalone.co.uk), it has been designed to celebrate texture, colour and scent, and plays host to a programme of wellness events (whitworth.manchester.ac.uk).



IT'S FESTIVAL SEASON!

It's not all about Glastonbury. Borrow a tent or book a luxury yurt for these alternative cultural weekenders

CURIOUS ARTS FESTIVAL, Hampshire, 21–23 July Described as 'high jinks for the high-minded,' this festival has talks by *The Sunday Times* art critic Waldemar Januszczak and poet Lemn Sissay, plus a midnight bat walk (curiousartsfestival.com).

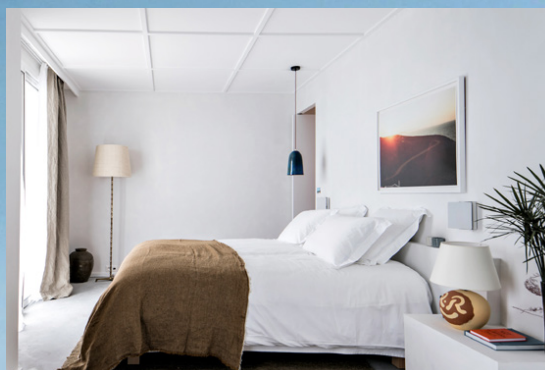
A FRIEND, A BOOK & A GARDEN FESTIVAL, Northamptonshire, 1–2 July The Baroque Boughton House hosts the Garden Museum's fourth literary festival. Gardener Dan Pearson and co-founder of Maggie's Centres Charles Jencks are both participating (gardenmuseum.org.uk).

ALSO FESTIVAL, Warwickshire, 30 June–2 July A genius idea: combine philosophy and debate with plentiful wine, music and fun. Listen to Oxford University researcher Dr Bergljot Gjelsvik answer questions on the myths of mindfulness, then enjoy a candlelit banquet (also-festival.com).

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RIVIERA BLISS

We will forever associate the Côte d'Azure with glamour: from the old-school 1960s jetset to the bottomless-bubbles of 1990s St Tropez discos. But Hotel Les Roches Rouges advocates a simpler way of taking time out on the Riviera. Designed by Paris interior architecture firm Festen, the focus is on small, locally-sourced pleasures: terracotta ceramics by Ceramiques Du Beaujolais and Le Labo bathroom lotions. Being outdoors is encouraged here – finish the day with a swim in the gorgeous natural seawater pool carved into the coastal rock, which lies below a garden full of verbena, mimosa, fig trees and myrtle. There is also a rooftop restaurant serving catch of the day, plus bikes to borrow, fishing boat trips, sets of Provençal ball game pétanque, and an outdoor cinema showing classic French and contemporary movies in the open air. From £307 per night (hotellesrochesrouges.com).



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