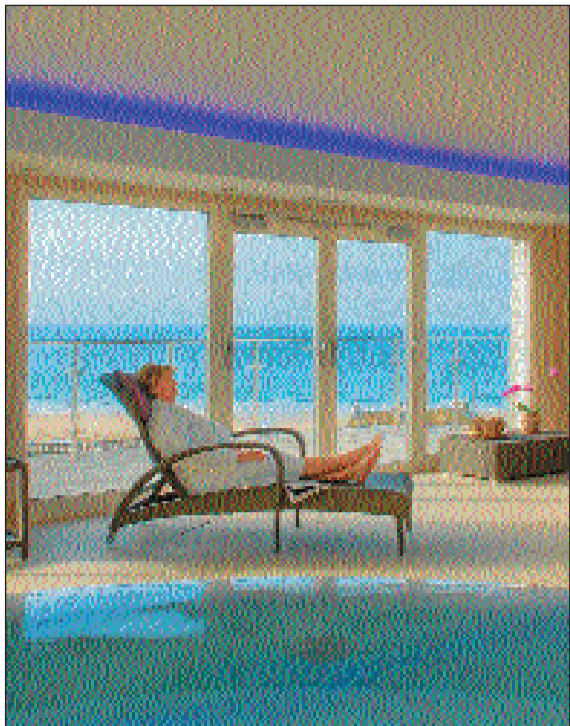
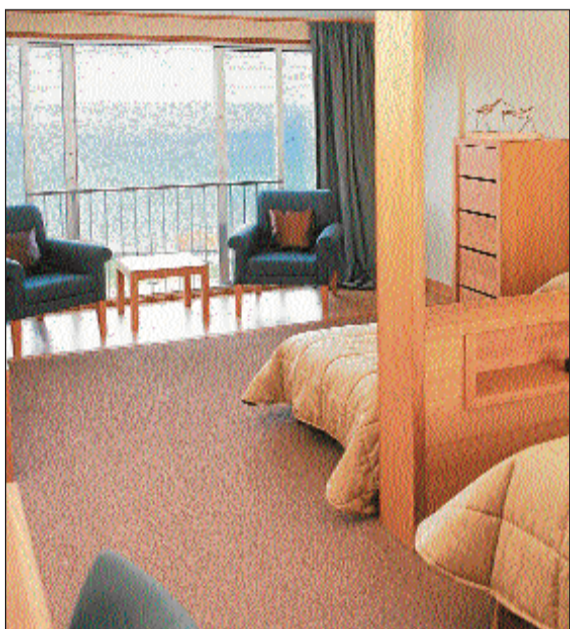


HOLIDAY

Rugged Cornish coast has stunning sea views to enjoy



Relax in the spa at Bedruthan Steps Hotel which has sea views



Comfortable rooms overlook the ocean at Bedruthan Steps Hotel

It would be easy to make a case for Cornwall being the most ruggedly beautiful of all the English counties. Whether it's walking across the moors or exploring the coastline it's impossible not to be struck by the stark beauty of our southernmost county.

It can conveniently be split into two halves based on the very distinct coastlines. The southern coastline, which we explored first, is full of little coves, the sort of place once favoured by pirates and smugglers, where illicit deeds were carried out in the dead of night.

So to explore, where better than to base yourself at the Luggar Hotel in the tiny village of Portloe? The hotel is split into three separate buildings with just 22 rooms. Even so it dominates the harbour.

There was an inn on the site of the current hotel in the 17th century which is reputed to have been the haunt of local smugglers.

Indeed, one of the landlords of the inn, Black Dunstan, was hanged for smuggling in the 1890s. The inn's liquor licence was withdrawn and it ceased trading.

Enchanting

The current hotel is in a boutique-style with light, airy rooms many with enchanting views looking out to sea or over the harbour, where the fishermen land their daily catch.

All rooms offer everything you would expect, with the latest in TV and DVD technology, Wi-Fi, well-equipped bathrooms and even fluffy bathrobes and slippers.

The communal areas have plenty of open fires, solid wooden beams and a cosy feel.

But perhaps the most impressive aspect of The Luggar is the eating experience.

The restaurant is perched over the harbour and you can hear the waves crashing almost beneath your feet.

As you would expect there is plenty of fish and shellfish on the menu - largely determined by what has been landed that day, but also options for meat eaters and vegetarians.

I enjoyed a bouillabaisse that was at least as good as anything that you would find in Marseille, while my wife, who is not a fish eater, simply loved her steak. If you were staying anywhere in Cornwall it would be worth travelling there just for the food alone.

Breakfast was a match for dinner - anywhere that has four different types of fish on

Report by **Tim Walters**

the menu is a winner in my book. The Luggar is really perfect for couples and is a great representation of what the south coast is all about.

And so in its own way is the Bedruthan Steps Hotel which we visited on the north coast.

It overlooks the coast at Mawgan Porth, not far from Newquay, on a coastline rich in sandy beaches ideal for children.

Which is exactly what is so wonderful about the Bedruthan Steps Hotel. The emphasis is firmly on the family.

With 40 years experience, it knows exactly how to cater for youngsters while giving parents plenty of time to relax.

There are indoor and outdoor play areas, daily entertainment, heated swimming pools, surf school and the Ofsted registered Children's Clubs to choose from, not forgetting the stunning Mawgan Porth beaches.

Parents can check their little ones into one of the three hour long 'Kid's Clubs' sessions, and while they are painting and playing, escape for a little 'me' time in the spa.

The spa itself boasts absolutely stunning views across the sea which you can enjoy from the comfort of an oversized spa pool which is for adults only. There is also a swimming pool, several steam rooms and all the latest beauty treatments that you would expect from a hotel of this quality.

Every one of the rooms or villas has a baby listening device which is connected to the switchboard meaning you can relax while having your evening meal.

The food itself is well pitched. There are special meal times for the much younger ones, giving you plenty of time to settle them down before heading for your own. The menu in the beautifully-appointed restaurant is focused firmly on local produce and not surprisingly there's plenty of fish.



The tiny village of Portloe in Cornwall is the location of the Luggar Hotel, perched over the harbour

Bedruthan Steps prides itself on making itself as sustainable as possible. From the solar panels heating the outdoor pools, grass roofs to provide insulation, sensor operated lights through to the reusing rain water runoff from the Ocean Spa and the compost bins, nothing goes to waste.

The rooms are clean and functional, and if you've got young children (up to about 12) and you don't fancy going abroad, then the Bedruthan Steps ticks all the right boxes. Ok, it's not a cheap option but the fact families go back year after year and you have to book in advance says much about the Bedruthan Steps experience.

Fact BOX

Prices at the Luggar Hotel start from £110 in low season rising to £290 for a cottage suite in high season, based on two people having B&B. Visit www.luggarhotel.co.uk
Prices at the Bedruthan Steps Hotel start from £77 per person, per night for dinner, B&B in a non-sea view room in low season rising to £129 for an apartment in high season. Visit www.bedruthan.com

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