

Venture out from a luxury lodge to enjoy the forest

Communing with nature without roughing it is becoming increasingly popular as comfortable lodges spring up in forests in the UK, *Sue Mallia* writes.

The latest crop is 12 luxury cedar lodges that make up The Sherwood Hideaway, nestled in Sherwood Forest on the Thoresby Estate in Nottinghamshire. The operators have aimed to create a boutique hotel-style atmosphere for guests seeking a tranquil retreat, where they can hide away or explore the countryside.

Each lodge has a state-of-the-art kitchen, a wood-burning stove, deck and flatscreen TV. Some have outdoor hot tubs but guests receive a discount on treatments at the spa in Thoresby Hall Hotel, within the park. The more energetic can cycle or walk for miles along trails and paths on the estate.

Prices for long weekends in June start at £590 for a two-bedroom lodge sleeping four (check in at 4pm on Friday and depart by 10am Monday). A week starts at £835 on the same basis. Two dogs are allowed in each lodge at an extra charge of £40 a dog.

Cabins in woodland and lochside sites on Forestry Commission estates are also available from Forest Holidays. Each site has a ranger and activities include night treks to spy on bats and owls. Bicycles can also be hired.

The cost of a four-night midweek break in a four-bedroom Golden Oak Plus cabin, sleeping eight, in the Forest of Dean, has been reduced by 50 per cent to £626 for arrivals this Monday or on June 21. A break of the same length starting on June 20 at either the Cropton or Keldy sites on the edge of the North York Moors National Park costs £343 in a two-bedroom Silver Birch cabin sleeping four. Both types of cabins have hot tubs and guests can take dogs for an extra £6 a night.

● www.sherwoodhideaway.com
www.forestholidays.co.uk/cabins