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THE SWAN

COTSWOLDS

The lowdown If you look up the word “cosy” in the dictionary, don’t be surprised to find a picture of this dinky Cotswolds hideaway, in the village of Ascott-Under-Wychwood. This is a kind of fantasy country pub for anyone secretly praying that *The Holiday* is actually a very glossy documentary. And in a rare instance of reality being better than Hollywood, you can also dine like a queen here, then stumble up to one of the eight highly desirable bedrooms and dream sweet dreams of the breakfast menu.

This 16th-century former coaching inn was taken over last year and given a slick makeover, with a palette of sage and forest green, petrol blue and fuchsia, warm, dark wood, and the printed wallpaper and textiles of your Pinterest-pinning reveries. Downstairs, framed by exposed beams and an open fireplace, the humming bar and dining room play host to both rosy-cheeked locals and mini-breakers with laid-back conviviality. Upstairs, meanwhile, you’ll find all the trappings of a boutique hotel – capacious, lounge-able baths, snugly robes, a jar

of homemade cookies and spa-worthy 100 Acres products that make you feel 87% calmer just by sniffing an open bottle. Calling the individually designed bedrooms welcoming is like saying Beyoncé “can sing a bit”.

Ascott-Under-Wychwood is tiny, so if you want to explore, you’ll need a car to truly take in the swooping hills and picturesque neighbouring villages that convinced Kate Moss the Cotswolds were good-looking enough to make her home outside the capital.

Worth getting out of bed for... Two words: the food. Elevated, comforting classics are the order of the day – the burger comes with toffee-apple sauce and a cheese you’ve never heard of; the bread basket comes with goat’s butter and bacon crumbs. Or try the hearty sharing platters (sure, have one to yourself, we’d never judge) – there’s baked potatoes with chilli, guac and all the trimmings, or The Swan Mixed Grill (more meat

than a Magic Mike audition queue).

Room for some afters? Then a) we salute you and b) how about Jaffa Cake chocolate pudding with pistachio ice cream?

In the know If you’re planning a visit in summer, there’s an expansive terrace outside that’s all impeccable rustic-chic styling and trailing bowers – ideal for a spot of balmy outdoor drinking. If you’re made of sterner stuff and want to embrace it earlier in the year, the hot-chocolate section of the menu is quite something...



GET ME THERE

Rooms from £90 a night, including continental breakfast; Countrycreatures.com/the-swan