

The cool hotel guide

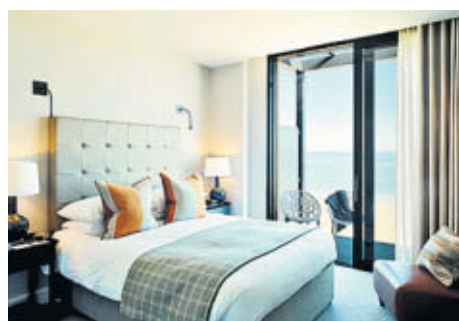
Carbis Bay Hotel, St Ives, Cornwall

In a nutshell

Overlooking its own blue-flag beach just outside St Ives, this 125-acre estate blends modernity with its Victorian roots. The original 1894 building has been added to over the years, most recently with eight luxury beach lodges, part of a £15 million development. There is also a spa with a heated outdoor pool and sauna pod, and a private yacht.

What are the rooms like?

The 45 rooms in the main house are classically styled and self-catering cottages offer flexibility for families. The contemporary beach lodges have three or four en suite bedrooms (with sea views), an open-plan living area, kitchenette, your own garden with rattan furniture, a hot tub and beach access. Guests relax on low-slung sofas with blankets by remote-controlled open fires. Ours (lodge six) had a wonderful bath overlooking the bay. Aperitifs arrive before dinner and you can order a breakfast hamper instead of eating in the hotel.



Need to know

Which is the best room?

Lodge eight (from £2,350 a night for eight) is the largest and most secluded.

What's the food like?

Excellent. The Sands restaurant has two AA rosettes and chandeliers, but doesn't feel stuffy. My crabcake amuse-bouche was followed by exquisite scallops (£12.50) and grilled-to-perfection megrim sole (£24.50). The wine list features Cornish options, including the award-winning Camel Valley Brut. Breakfast can be eaten in the sea-facing

conservatory and there is a Beach Club restaurant serving Mediterranean fare.

Who goes there?

Mostly couples. Families are well catered for and there is a summer children's club.

The highs, the lows, the verdict

Nine out of ten

The beach lodges epitomise laid-back coastal chic. They are pricey, however, and the lighting control panels are irritatingly bright at night.

Ellie Ross

Ellie Ross was a guest of Carbis Bay Hotel (01736 795311, carbisbayhotel.co.uk), which has B&B doubles from £240. Beach lodges for six to eight people cost from £1,200 a night B&B. Three rooms have wheelchair access. No single-occupancy discount; dogs in beach lodges only

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