



COUNTRY LIFE

Venetia van Kuffeler discovers an authentic slice of quintessentially rural Britain at Water Meadow Cottage on the Blenheim Estate

THERE'S NO TIME like the summer months to escape city life and explore the British countryside. Satisfying the tastes and demands of today's modern traveller, Water Meadow Cottage – an eighteenth century hunting lodge nestled in the sublime grounds of the Blenheim Palace Estate – is a fabulous place to start. Blenheim is the birth place of Sir Winston Churchill, home to the 11th Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, and one of England's most spectacular stately homes. The chance to stay in a private home on the Blenheim Estate is quite an opportunity.

Water Meadow Cottage represents a new breed in short-stay lettings, and provides an alternative to boutique hotels, while providing guests with far more freedom and privacy. Located at

the end of its own private drive, this cosy, two-bedroom country retreat, made of Oxfordshire Cotswold stone, is captivating. Shaded by oaks and horse chestnuts, the picture-perfect cottage sits on the edge of the River Evenlode, with a traditional stone bridge that guards the working entrance to the Duke of Marlborough's farmlands.

The house has been beautifully and thoughtfully refurbished, but with every conceivable modern comfort one could ask for. A British theme runs throughout the cottage, a philosophy that is incorporated into the very fabric of the place, using vintage, restored and reclaimed materials and only the best in British design: Ochre light fixtures, Cole & Son wallpaper, Royal Doulton fireplaces and Andrew Martin fabrics,

to name a few. The kitchen houses state-of-the-art appliances and rustic earthenware, as well as a charming honesty larder, meaning guests don't have to worry about stocking up on essentials – just one of many well-thought out touches. The bathroom includes a cast iron roll top bath big enough for two – a romantic place to unwind before retiring to one of the two bedrooms.

Even better, the cottage is owned by the luxury lifestyle company Unlisted, who are on hand to tend to any guest requirements, including:

- Catering services from a private chef for dinners a deux to a fully staffed garden party on the cottage grounds
- On-site fitness sessions, yoga & spa treatments







ACCOMMODATION COMPRISES:

- Two double bedrooms
- Family bathroom with walk-in shower, bath tub and underfloor heating
- Dining room / Library
- Sitting room
- Kitchen – fully equipped and stocked with grocery essentials
- Scullery with honesty larder
- Downstairs WC
- Covered & heated outdoor terrace
- Summer House / At-home spa room
- Private enclosed landscaped garden

- Childcare
- Airport transfers
- Vintage and sport car hire
- Bespoke Fortnum & Mason hampers
- VIP access to the nearby Bicester Village
- Area Guides – charismatic historians and personal shoppers with insider knowledge
- VIP access / event coordination to Royal Ascot, Cheltenham Gold Cup, Henley Royal Regatta

Guests are unlikely to run out of things to do. Aside from Blenheim Palace which is a gentle country walk away, nearby Woodstock is excellent for a pub lunch, Oxford, the 'city of dreaming spires' is a 15-minute drive and Bicester Village is also close by for some essential discount designer shopping. Water Meadow Cottage is that perfect slice of country life for those who can't – or don't want to – forgo the comforts and conveniences of urban life. And at just over an hour by train from London, it is amazingly convenient.

**FROM £425 PER NIGHT (2 NIGHT MINIMUM),
OR £2,525 PER WEEK**

Peak rates and 3 night minimum stay apply over high season
5 night rates available

£25 surcharge per night for 1 large or 2 small dogs

www.watermeadowcottage.co.uk

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