

RECLAIM MAGAZINE

2nd JULY / Circ: 20,000



House with History THE GROVE

Nestled in Hertfordshire, just a short journey from London, this former party manor for royalty and aristocracy has been returned to its glory days

VIDEO MELINDA HARRIS

The turn-off for The Grove is quite auspicious. But as you wind your way through the golf course and over the bridge nothing prepares you for the commanding Georgian manor that comes into view sitting atop the hill. Set in 300 acres of rolling Hertfordshire countryside, this former home of the Villiers family – the Earls of Clarendon – has a rich history dating back to at least the 1500s, though there is archaeological evidence on the grounds of Bronze Age pottery. Attracting the aristocracy and artists alike, painter George Stubbs regularly graced its grounds, inspired to create his famous equine portraits.

Towering over the terrace today is a beautiful black walnut tree, one of the first to be brought to Britain and presented to the Earl of Clarendon as a sapling in the 1770s by the great explorer Captain James Cook. When the fifth Earl became secretary and aide to Queen Victoria in 1846, he decided to throw lavish house parties for the Queen and British gentry who would travel up from London for the weekend parties – a new phenomenon which *The Times* described as “weekending”. However, just before the Great Depression, The Grove suffered a downturn as the Villiers family was forced to sell up to reduce the burden of estate tax. The mansion was used variously as a college of nutrition, riding and boarding schools, before it was requisitioned as the secret headquarters for the railways during World War II. Guards patrolled at night and six air-raid shelters were built on the grounds.

In 1996, despite The Grove being in a derelict state, the Ralph Trustees saw beyond the ruin to the beauty of what the house once was and with the help of architects, interior designers, landscape gardeners and golf course architects, it was transformed into the luxury resort it is today. “When we restored The Grove 15 years ago, it was in a dilapidated state. In some rooms you could look up and see the sky,” award-winning interior designer Martin Hulbert of Martin Hulbert



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What Martin has produced at The Grove is the feeling of a house that has always been lived in, with each generation adding furniture and decor, creating layers and stories that add and blend rather than clash, providing a juxtaposition that is both interesting and unique. This is something that people can introduce into their own homes too. "It's a failure to believe that new and old have never been combined with success," says Martin. "The integrity of furniture in most residential contexts is usually broken. However, when that moment all comes on the same period. A piece introduced here, say, an early Georgian frame in Victorian rooms would then have been one of its advantages to once look to its later leaves. "Work with what you have, that's my philosophy," he says.

Martin is also happy to share where he thinks the best restored and vintage finds are to be made. "Antiques fairs, like those at Finsbury and Audley, are well worth seeking out. Some fairs have also gained a reputation for interesting and high quality antiques. Tisbury in

Gloucestershire and Farnborough in West Sussex are great. Martin's advice is not to be over-enthusiastic and looking available online. "Occasionally a one-off sale can mean a bargain find - but this is the 'I'm going now'."

Recently, Martin returned to The Grove for a dramatic renovation of The Glasshouse. The extension will open in May with a new extension, which is an impressive triple-height, glass conservatory added to the main building, so being the outside. A lot of work went into The Glasshouse has been specifically designed, created and constructed at the site project. Items can be made hanging a sculpture, made of bronze and brass, made with glass and silver and glass sets, which have been introduced to more gently introduced and add a touch of magic to the space. And, with Martin's fondness for combining old and new, it's great to see the new and old together, each other. "We're looking forward to seeing the final results, which represent yet another great mark on the history of this beautiful property."

— @shopwithcrack



Watering can, in the garden, vintage wall art, £22, for the paper, read.



Deck chairs, in the garden, vintage wall art, £20, for the paper, read.



Four-poster bed, in the bedroom, Victorian Argle bed an ornate double four-poster bed, £2,450, for the paper, read.



Chair lounge, in the lounge and conservatory, for the paper, read.

Get the look

Recreate the lived-in Victorian "weekend" style, with classic antiques mixed with retro pieces for garden and conservatory



Set of chairs, in the conservatory, vintage wall art, £40, for the paper, read.



Chest of drawers, in the bedroom, Georgian mahogany chest of drawers, £295, for the paper, read.

how to spend it

An outdoor cinema set in The Grove's garden

The Grove hotel in Hertfordshire is collaborating with cinema group Everyman on an outdoor summer series



The Grove, set in 300 acres, is hosting a pop-up cinema this summer

JULY 10 2019 / CHRISTINA OHLY EVANS



Enjoy cinema outdoors this summer as The Grove in Hertfordshire launches a pop-up series with theatre specialists Everyman. Throughout August, hotel and restaurant guests at the lush, 300-acre estate will be able to partake in a special silver screen series in the hotel's walled garden – a secluded area with a private “beach”, comfortable beanbag chairs and, of course, popcorn and other film snacks galore.



The film schedule of Everyman's Secret Garden at The Grove includes classics as well as new releases

In a nod to the surrounding verdant beauty, this first summer series will have an overarching “secret garden” theme, with films such as *Pride & Prejudice* and *The Jungle Book* taking centre screen. With more than 45 films set for mid-afternoon matinees, evening and late-night viewings, there will be programming for people of all ages and interests. Family-friendly features are set for Saturdays and Sundays at 3.30pm, available exclusively to hotel guests, with classics such as *Peter Rabbit*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Mary Poppins Returns* set to charm the younger crowd. Evening screenings at 8pm from Wednesday through to Sunday nights will feature films suitable for a 12-plus-year-old audience, including *Wonder Woman*, *The Greatest Showman*, *Green Book* and *Captain Marvel*, while late-night screenings will take place on Friday through to Sunday nights from 10.45pm. From *A Star Is Born* to *The Blair Witch Project* to *Gone Girl*, expect a selection of racier, often spine-tingling flicks that will pair perfectly with a cocktail.

The curated mix of films has been chosen by Everyman and will play on an enormous screen, with The Grove's Potting Shed restaurant and bountiful kitchen garden as a backdrop. For a night of films, cocktails and dinner provided by either the newly refurbished Glasshouse or the low-key-yet-lovely Stables bistro, the hour's drive from central London is well worth the effort.

FT HOW TO SPEND IT INSTAGRAM

10th JULY / Followers: 58,600



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The Grove Hotel

ft_howtospendit From *Pride & Prejudice* and *The Jungle Book* to *The Blair Witch Project* and *Gone Girl*, Everyman Cinemas' alfresco summer pop-up, done in collaboration with @thegrovehotel in Hertfordshire, has a film for every palate. Running throughout August, the screenings will take place in the hotel's walled garden – a secluded area with a private "beach", beanbag chairs and, of

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LONDON UNATTACHED

11th JULY / Followers: 25,000



The Glasshouse – An Opulent Dining Alternative

June 5, 2019 by Fiona Maclean – 1 Comment

Review – The Glasshouse at the Grove Hotel:

The reputation of The Grove Hotel goes before it. A luxurious five-star hotel in the Hertfordshire countryside with elegant spa, over 200 rooms and 300 acres of grounds which include a championship golf course, it's a popular destination both for corporate and leisure events. So an invitation to check the newly refurbished Glasshouse Restaurant was one not to miss.



The Glasshouse Restaurant is one of three dining spaces in the hotel and has recently been overhauled and elegantly restyled. More than that though, executive chef Stephen Wheeler has worked with Head Chef Luke Reeves to create something quite unique in this country.



Anyone who has been to the Middle East or the Far East is likely to have come across a particular kind of lavish buffet restaurant with no limits. The Glasshouse aims to create a uniquely British version of that concept with a range of buffet stations serving hot and cold food, often made to order and always of the highest quality. We went along to try the food and learn more about the offering.



But first, a glass of fizz for me in the pretty bar, while my companion Heidi, who was driving, enjoyed a Fentiman's Lemonade

One of the hardest things about this kind of sybaritic dining is to decide what to try. In the end, both of us selected a plateful of seafood, cold meats and cheeses to start. There were so many options it was difficult to know what to pick.

I particularly liked the salad bar, where a chef was on hand to dress your selection exactly the way you wanted. And, I loved my selection of shellfish and smoked fish, though I was really tempted to add more cheeses and cold meats from the selection on offer



Next, there were so many more lavish and well-appointed food stations, many with dishes to be cooked to order.

From pizza baked in the Glasshouse restaurant's own wood-fired pizza oven to fresh artisan pasta cooked and dressed with the sauce of your choice.

The Asian noodle station offered the chance to have your own Asian soup made to order. The Robata was grilling lamb cutlets when we arrived but we could have asked for any one of a number of options.



Instead, we were both lured by the stunning roast beef – with perhaps the most perfect Yorkshire puddings, gravy and Hasselback potatoes. It's the kind of meal that can be tired and sad done badly.

LONDON UNATTACHED

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Here at the Glasshouse, their beef is sourced from Donald Russell and then aged in house. The tenderest medium-rare slices of beef onto your plate – it's hard to avoid over-indulging.

Once we'd completely filled ourselves up with starters and main courses, we went to check out the Dessert station. Apart from a stunning array of cakes, pastries and bakes, there's a build your own ice-cream station with a lavish set of sprinkles and toppings and a chocolate tap!



After coffee we went for a stroll around the hotel and the grounds. It really is a stunning space, whether you want to eat al-fresco, enjoy an elegant afternoon tea or just go for a swim! We loved the kitchen garden where many of the vegetables used in the restaurant are grown. And the giraffe, who seemed to feel right at home.



What we liked best about The Glasshouse was the flexibility the buffet offers to guests, whether hotel residents or visitors. It's the kind of place where you'd be happy to bring the whole family for a Sunday lunch because everyone gets to pick what they want to eat (whether that's pasta with red sauce or freshly shucked oysters, robata grilled salmon and every possible variation on an ice cream sundae you can think of). But it's also elegant enough for a first date and refined enough for a working lunch. If you've ever yearned for a Dubai style Friday Brunch, this is the perfect British version!



The Glasshouse is open for breakfast (7 – 10.30 am), lunch (12.30 – 2 pm) and dinner (6 – 9.30 pm), as well as afternoon tea in The Glasshouse Bar (1.30 – 4.30pm). Lunch starts at £42 per person, with dinner from £49 per person.

For more information about The Grove, please visit: www.thegrove.co.uk or call 01923 296010.

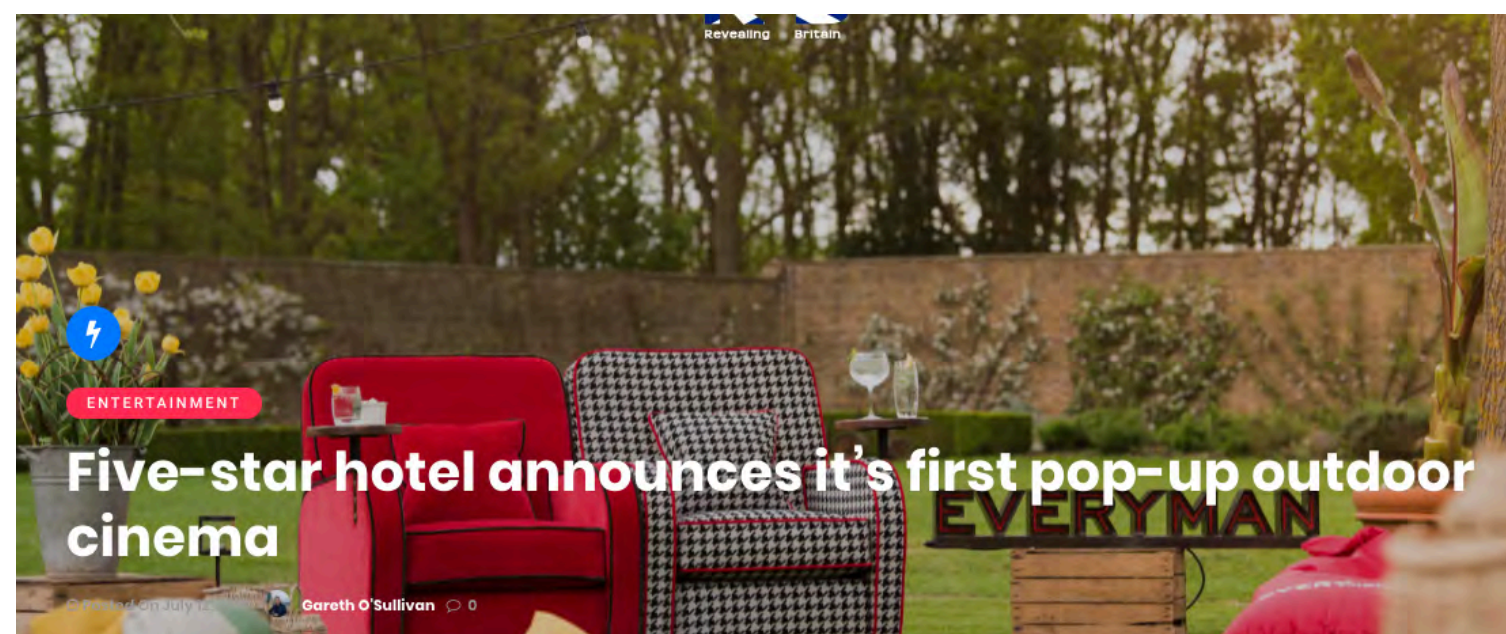
The Glasshouse Restaurant
The Grove,
Chandler's Cross,
Hertfordshire, WD3 4TG

Other options we'd recommend if you are looking for a trip out of town that isn't too far include [Stoke Park Country House](#) where we went for a special Veganuary menu, the [Montagu Arms in Beaulieu](#) and of course, [L'Ortolan in Reading](#). They all have quite different offerings so do check them out.



REVEALING BRITAIN

15th JULY / MUU: 5,000



The Grove, a five-star hotel in Hertfordshire, has announced a partnership with cinema specialists, Everyman, to provide a pop-up cinema for its guests to enjoy this summer.

Throughout the entire month of August, hotel residents and restaurant guests will be able to enjoy a variety of popular, classic films as well as new releases in the hotel's secluded Walled Garden, complete with bean bags, delicious snacks and beverages.

Secret Garden will be the overarching theme of the pop-up cinema – with many films a nod to the lush English garden surroundings. The programming schedule will include a mixture of family-friendly films, new releases and well-known classics.

Up to 45 films will be screened throughout the month, with evening screenings from Wednesday to Sunday, together with selected matinee viewings and late night screenings. A snapshot of the films on offer include:

Matinees (exclusively for hotel residents) – Saturday-Sunday 3.30pm
(family friendly films, available for hotel residents)

- The Secret Garden
- Beauty & The Beast
- Matilda
- Jungle Book
- Peter Rabbit
- Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
- Coco
- The BFG
- Mary Poppins Returns

Evening Screenings – Wednesday-Sunday 8.00pm
(aimed at 12+ audience with a more family-friendly accent at the weekends)

- E.T,
- Jumanji
- Isle of Dogs
- Black Panther
- La La Land
- Pride & Prejudice
- Dirty Dancing
- Back to the Future
- The Greatest Showman
- Mean Girls
- Wonder Woman
- Sleepless in Seattle
- Bohemian Rhapsody
- Mrs Doubtfire
- Jurassic Park 1
- Green Book
- Captain Marvel
- Forrest Gump

Late Night Screenings – Friday-Saturday 10.45pm
(expect thrills, frights and sheer pleasure in these spine-tingling screenings)

- The Beach
- Fight Club
- Donnie Darko
- Gone Girl
- AMY
- The Blair Witch Project
- Leon
- A Star is Born
- US
- True Romance

Films will be aired on a large screen within [The Grove's](#) enchanting Walled Garden, which is hidden behind the grand gates in the heart of the hotel's 300 acres.



The Walled Garden's kitchen garden and Potting Shed provide the picturesque backdrop for the cinema, creating the perfect haven for guests to relax on a summer evening.

Alongside the cinema, there will be a pop up Tanqueray Bar, a Ciroc Shack serving vodka slushies as well as a selection of popcorn, ice cream and old fashioned sweets for guests to enjoy during the screenings.

The Grove's pop-up cinema will run from Thursday 1st August until Saturday 31st August, 2019.

Inclusive overnight hotel packages invite guests to experience the cinema at their leisure, with packages also available for guests dining at The Glasshouse or The Stables.



ABSOLUTELY MAMA

17th JULY / Circ: 30,000

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ISSN 2398-8711

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THE MAGAZINE FOR STYLISH MUMS

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08/07/2019 14:19

escapes INSPIRATIONS

ISLAND LIFE
ELIVI SKIATHOS
The hotel has announced the opening of its kids club. Children can now enjoy a range of activities while parents relax at the resort's four white-sand beaches, or soak up the outstanding natural beauty of the surroundings.
elivihotels.com

mama's
TRAVEL NOTES
Helen Baron rounds up the most exciting destinations at home and abroad

NOW OPEN
THE GROVE
New to our favourite country-house hotel is the refurbished Glasshouse restaurant. A triple-height glass extension has been added, so guests can enjoy views of the garden and terrace as they dine while the kids are in the creche.
thegrove.co.uk

we love

FAB FINS
HEVEA
A new launch from the pioneering eco-brand, these innovative flippers are made with partly upcycled raw natural rubber. Flexible and comfy, they come in peach and mint colours. €30;
heveaplanet.com

3 for OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Sonnwies
TYROL
From guesthouse beginnings on the owner's farm to a modern family paradise. On-site activities include water slides, climbing walls, pony riding, zip wires, hiking, Nordic walking, tobogganing, mountain biking and ice skating.
sonnwies.com

Les Carrasses
LANGUEDOC
At this upscale but super family-friendly chateau you can take a group horse-ride into some of France's finest countryside. Meanwhile, the kids club offers plenty of outdoor games and even trips to local sites of interest.
lescarrasses.com

Green Spa Resort
STANGLWIRT
A five-star bio resort where you can enjoy hiking, tennis, horse-riding and golf as well as a stunning natural swimming lake, set against the backdrop of the Wilder Kaiser Mountain. There's a farm and waterworld for little ones too.
stanglwirt.com

August 2019 | 81

Watford Observer

NEWS

23rd June

Events at The Grove offer a taste of summer

By Kelly Pells



[f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [e](#) 0 comment

This summer sees an impressive roster of events taking place at The Stables restaurant at The Grove Hotel, Hertfordshire, running from June right through to the end of August.

The five-star hotel is the perfect destination to enjoy a balmy evening at The Stables, with two pop-up bars, live music and BBQ events as well as a guest chef evening.

Pop-Up Spritz Bar

Saturday, June 8, to Wednesday, July 31

Throughout June and July, drinks moguls Diageo will be hosting a Hello Spritz pop-up bar on The Stables terrace where guests will be able to bask in the sunshine, enjoy breath-taking views and sip on four specially curated sparkling cocktails

July BBQ and Band Night

Saturday, July 27

Nestled at the heart of the old stable block is the contemporary Players' Lounge and outdoor courtyard, where guests will be able to make the most of the long summer evenings with a three course BBQ, complete with live music courtesy of The

Overtures



Pop-Up Gin Bar

Thursday, August 1, to Saturday, August 31

Bringing the spirit of the outdoors to The Stables, Puddingstone Distillery will be hosting a Campfire Gin Pop-Up Bar on the restaurant's terrace with their range of iconic gins. Guests can expect to sample some classic and contemporary gins such as London Dry, Cask Aged and Navy Strength, along with delightfully refreshing fever tree mixer

An Evening with Dario Cecchini, The Tuscan Butcher

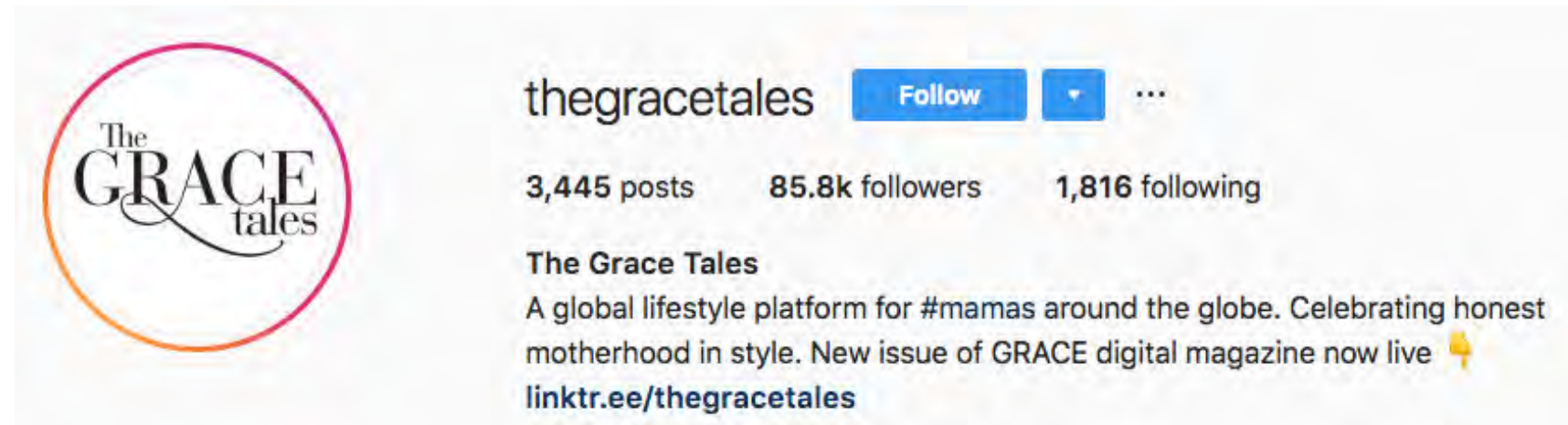
Thursday, August 8

Dario Cecchini hails from Panzano in Chianti, Tuscany and is known for cooking from the heart, as well as running his butcher's shop L'Antica Macelleria Cecchini and Solociccia. Dario will be hosting an evening at The Stables, where he will cook and serve his nose to tail menu, which includes six meat courses, seasonal vegetables, Tuscan bread and extra virgin olive oil in a delicious family style dining experience

For more information visit thegrove.co.uk

THE GRACE TALES INSTAGRAM

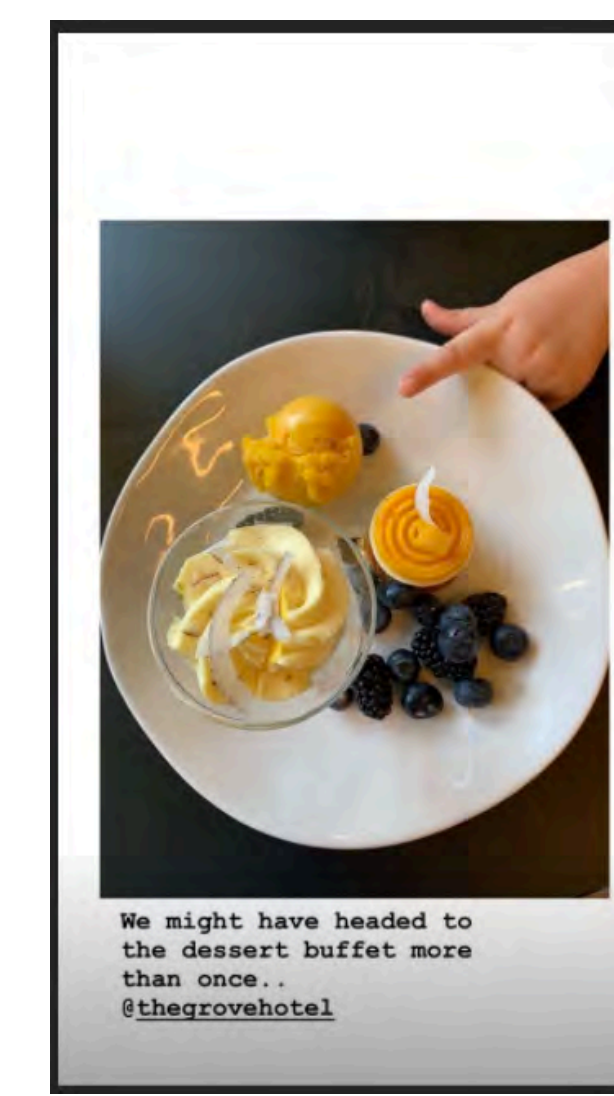
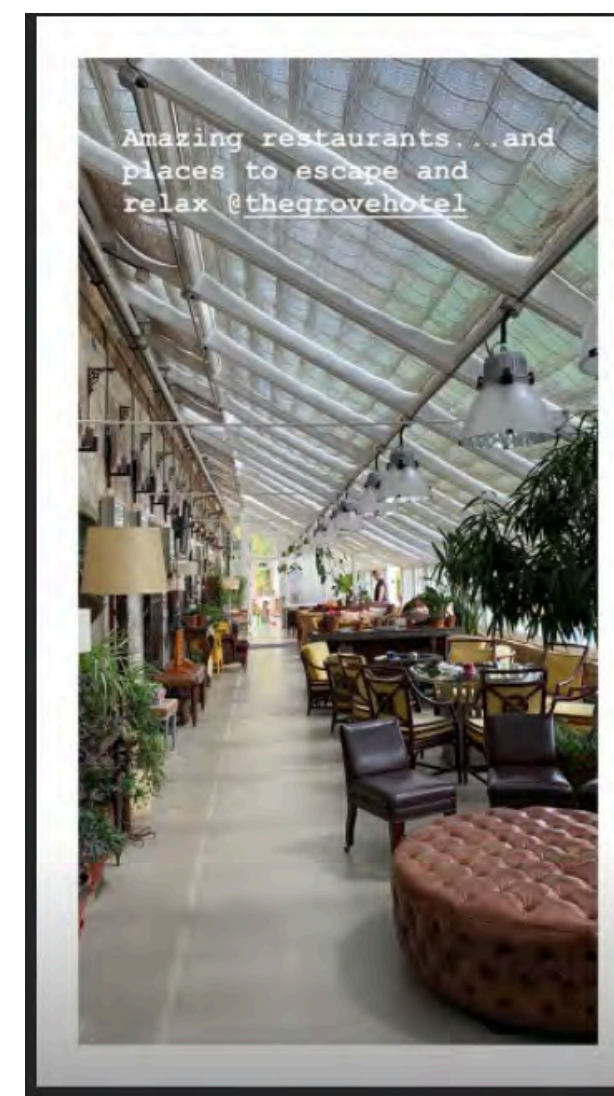
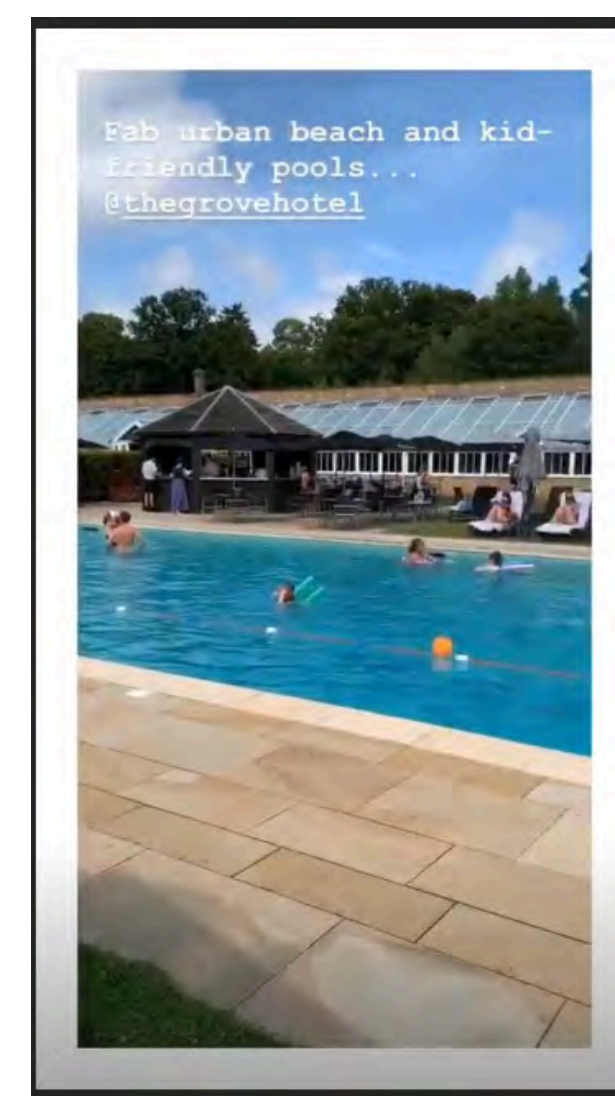
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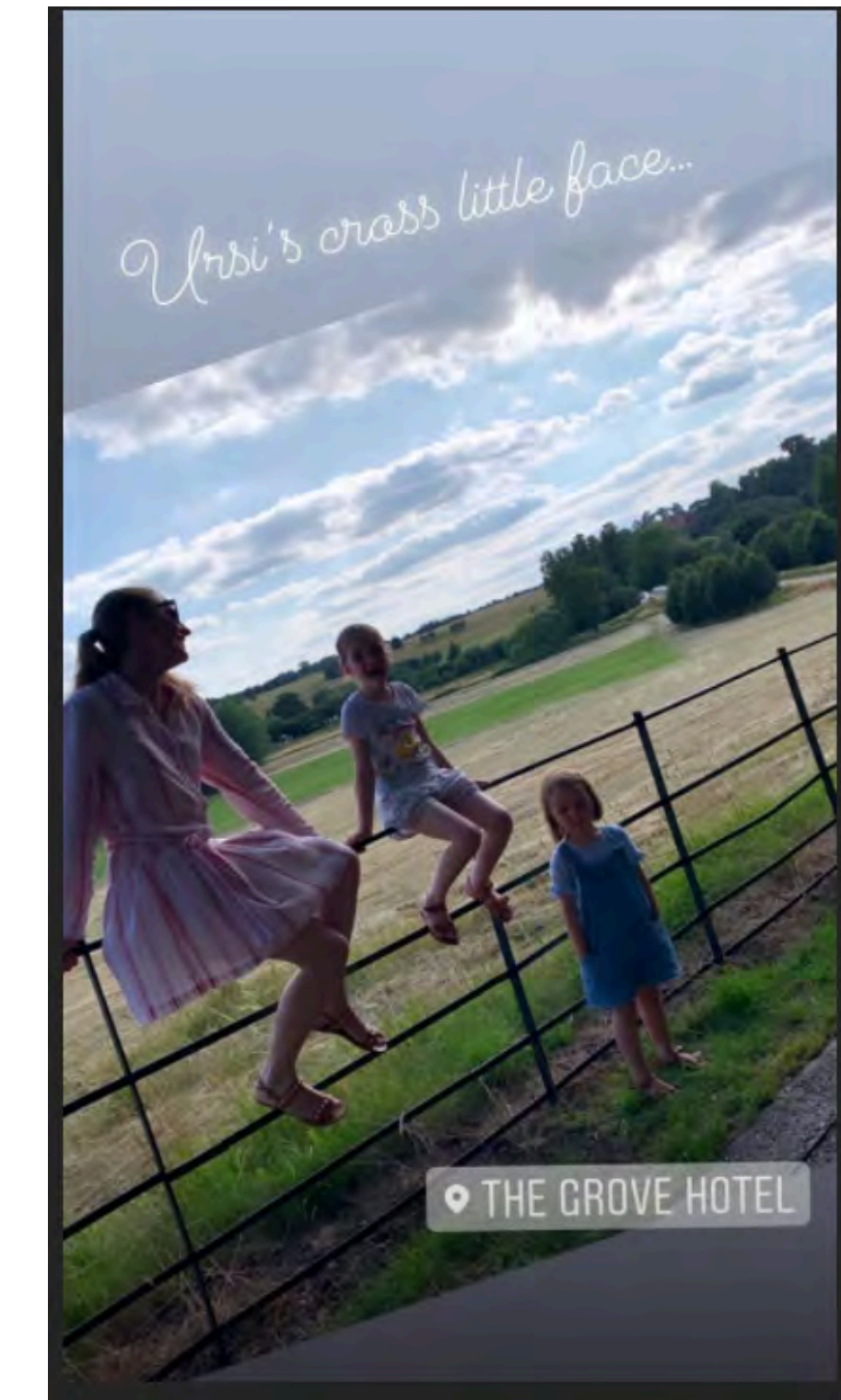
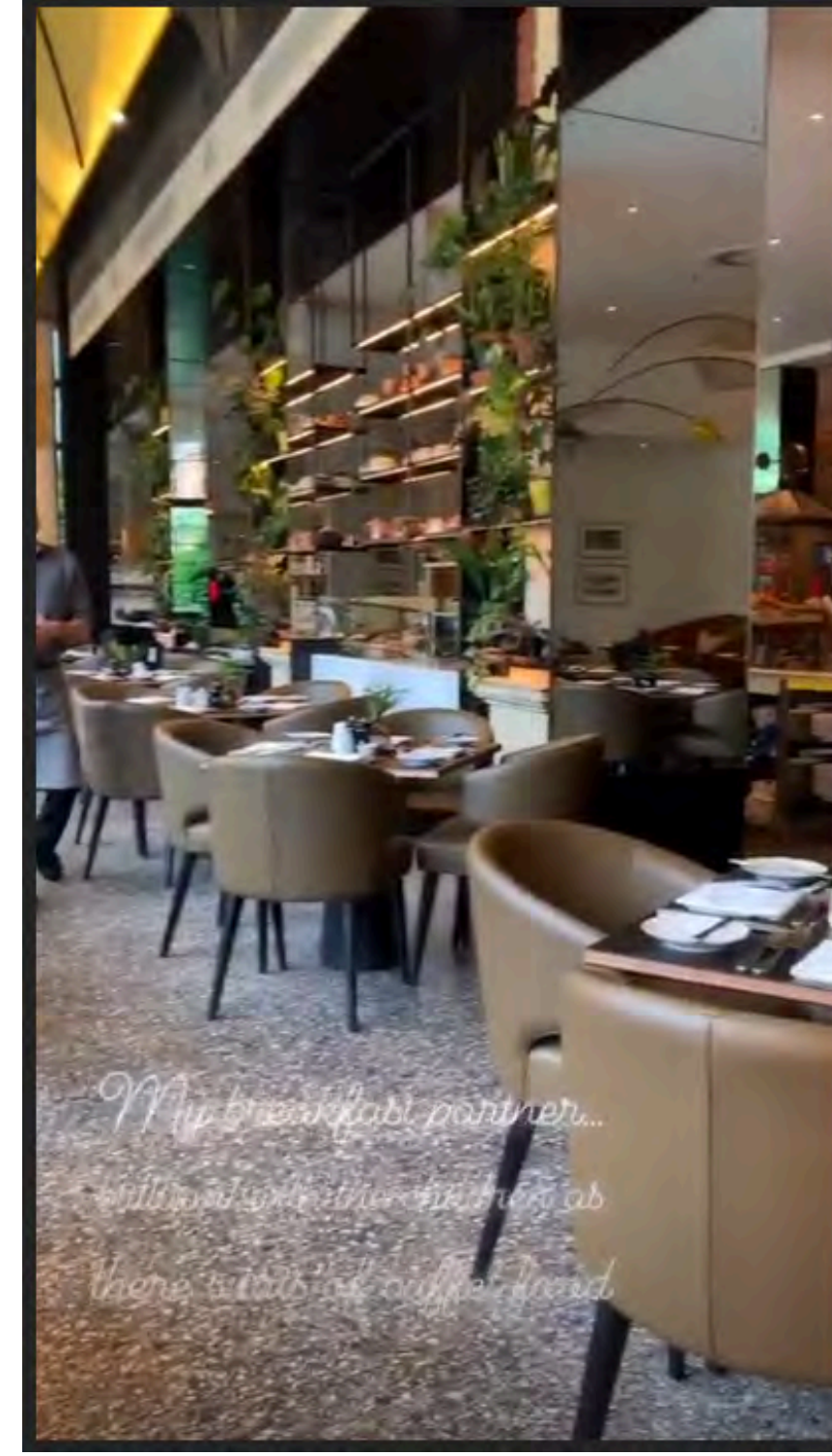


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EVENTS AND THINGS TO DO

Things to do in London with the kids during the summer holidays

JOCHAN EMBLEY, ANJANA GOSAI

School's out, sun's out — it's time for the summer holidays.

Children up and down the nation are celebrating six weeks of homework-free bliss, but for parents it can be rather more challenging.

To help out, we've put together this [list of things to do](#) with the kids in London, meaning you shouldn't be short of ideas until the school gates reopen in September.

Some of our suggestions are **entirely free** and available whenever, while others cost and must be booked in advance — so be sure to plan ahead when drawing up your itinerary.

Enjoy an enchanted evening in a secret garden

Just 20-minutes from central London, five star country hotel **The Grove** has an array of activities for families. Book a dinner at their newly refurbished Glasshouse restaurant - a local favourite, with eight epic food stations where chefs prepare fresh, tasty dishes that will delight even the fussiest of eaters. Once the feast is over, head over to the secluded Walled Garden to enjoy their pop-up outdoor cinema. The hotel have partnered with Everyman cinema to offer a roster of family friendly films that will appeal to all ages. Grab your headphones, snuggle up on a beanbag and watch classic films and new releases such as Moana, The Greatest Showman, ET and Matilda on the large screen. Snacks and beverages are also available throughout, including a pop up Tanqueray Bar, a Ciroc Shack serving vodka slushies as well as a selection of popcorn, ice cream and old-fashioned sweet. From August 1 - 31.



Lifestyle › Wellness › Wellness travel

18 sumptuous spas across England for a pre-wedding wellness break

There's no better time to de-stress than before you take the trip down the aisle

LAURA HAMPSON | 3 days ago | 0 comments

A recent study from bridal company **Zola** revealed that 96 per cent of people find wedding planning stressful.

From managing guest lists, to finding a venue, dress, and catering while sticking to a strict budget, it's no wonder the majority of the 500 engaged and newlywed couples surveyed said the whole process was taxing.

This is why it's a great idea to check yourself into a spa for a spot of pampering and a dash of relaxation ahead of the big day.

Below, we've curated a list of our favourite pre-wedding **wellness spas** across England, perfect for the bride to be.

In Greater London ...

The Grove



(The Grove)

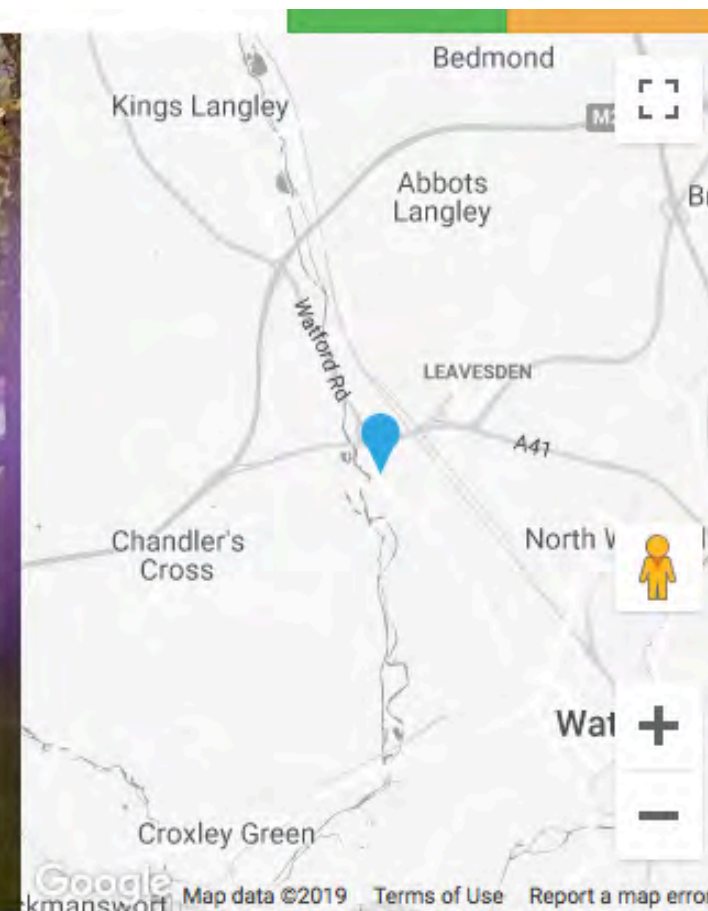
Where: Watford, WD3 4TG

Just 50 minutes from central London, The Grove's spa is the perfect place to unwind by yourself or with your bridesmaids. The team at The Grove can curate bespoke treatments for you and your bridal party, from facials to manicures, or choose from the extensive treatment list – the Natura Bissé treatments are particularly lush.

thegrove.co.uk/

URBANOLOGIE

24th JULY / MUU: 15,000



LONDON > POP-UPS > SUMMER POP UP CINEMA AT THE GROVE

The Grove hotel in Hertfordshire is collaborating with cinema group Everyman on an outdoor summer cinematic series.



Throughout August, partake in a special silver screen series in the hotel's walled garden, which is hidden behind the grand gates in the heart of the hotel's 300 acres. This first summer series has a "secret garden" theme to match the setting, with more than 45 films set for mid-afternoon matinees, evening and late-night viewings, with programming for people of all ages and interests, with films such as Pride & Prejudice and The Jungle Book.

Alongside the cinema, there is a pop up Tanqueray Bar, a Ciroc Shack serving vodka slushies as well as a selection of popcorn, ice cream and old fashioned sweets to enjoy during the screenings. The Grove's pop-up cinema runs from Thursday 1st August until Saturday 31st August and accessible (Wednesday to Sunday) to hotel guests and also available for guests dining at The Glasshouse or The Stables.

Ideal For
Cinematic experience

FROM	01 AUG	31 AUG
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Glamour And Gastronomy At The Grove And The Glasshouse



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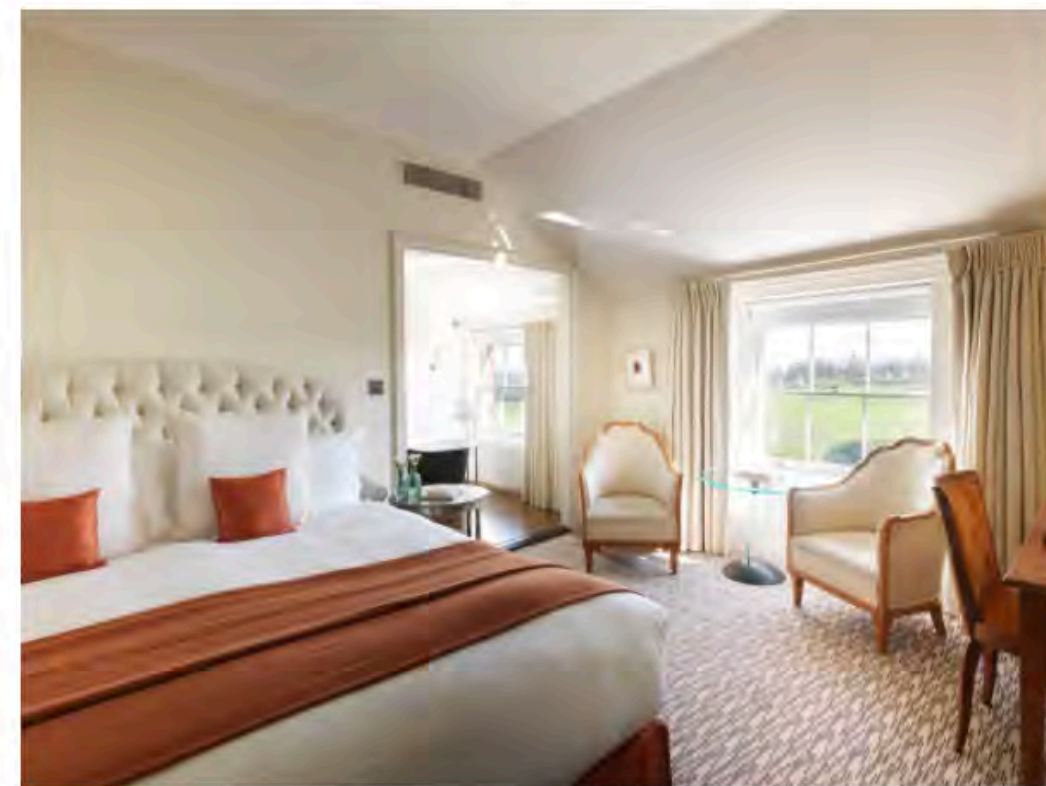


Online Editor, Simon Wittenberg, enjoys a weekend stay at the five-star Hertfordshire hotel, and dines at the recently renovated Glasshouse restaurant.

The sweeping drive rolls over a small bridge and through the beautifully kept golf course to reveal a red brick mansion house dating back to the 16th century. Once home to the Earls of Clarendon, it has since been extended, and is today a 215-bedroom five-star hotel and a firm favourite in the world of showbiz.



The X Factor Boot Camp has been filmed there, and it has also been used by the England football team when the squad plays at Wembley. Set in 300 acres of scenic countryside, The Grove is just 18 miles from Central London, and is easily accessible thanks to being close to the main arterial routes of the A41 and the M25.



There are various classifications of accommodation on offer at this property, and on the Saturday night in July that we visited, the room rate was starting at £395 excluding breakfast for a Superior King or Twin which face the car park at the front. For those wanting the experience of residing in the older part of the hotel, the rate for a Deluxe King including breakfast was £670. The Executive, Vice Presidential and Presidential Suites are also available for guests who have the more extravagant budgets.



Deluxe King room at the Grove.

Greeted by some delicious macarons, we stayed in a relatively spacious Deluxe King room in the West Wing, priced at £520 for the night including breakfast. It came furnished with a bed dressed in crisp white linen and faced the large Samsung Smart TV, plus there was some sand coloured soft seating and cushions.

Pulling back the floor to ceiling curtains revealed a one-foot-wide balcony and a view of the beautifully manicured gardens and golf course which granted the added surprise of two helicopters landing and departing just a few metres away.



With our room being at the rear of the hotel, and overlooking The Glasshouse conservatory, it was a relatively quiet spot and was well insulated from the outdoors. The marble clad ensuite featured a standalone rain shower, a dressing table lined with nicely scented accessories from ESPA, and an inviting roll top bath over which a butterfly themed painting was hanging. At The Grove, check-in is at 15:00 on a Saturday, and departure the following morning is by 12:00, which gives ample time for a lie-in before kicking off the day.



Dining

When it comes to eating at The Grove, there are a few on-site options. The Collette's fine dining restaurant, which we visited six years ago, is unfortunately no more, and although the new concept is yet to be defined at this venue, it has previously been used to host a pop-up.

However, fear not, as there's still The Stables at the far end of the West Wing serving steak, burgers and fish, the Potting Shed pop-up in the Walled Garden, and finally, The Glasshouse, where we went to for our buffet-style evening meal.



The Glasshouse restaurant.

The latter re-opened in May 2019 following an extensive three-month renovation, which resulted in a complete transformation of the space, and also saw the capacity increase from 170 to around 220 people per sitting. The refurbishment was the responsibility of the award-winning Martin Hulbert Design studio, which has been tasked with The Grove's interior styling since the property first opened. The décor combines plenty of striking gold features with dark wooden tables and brown leather seating. Plus, it's dimly lit during dinner, so there's a slightly romantic feel about it. Furthermore, compared to the previous iteration, the kitchens are much more open and interactive, rather than the team being stationed behind one large counter.



LUXURIOUS MAGAZINE

25th JULY / MUU: 350,000

luxurious magazine

This eatery is arranged on two different levels, so those in the conservatory area have to master a small set of steps when accessing the main buffet on the upper section. However, they do have the edge when it comes to the dessert cabinet which lies just near to the entrance.



Dinner at The Glasshouse costs £62 per person on a Saturday evening (excluding beverages of any kind), and £49 for the rest of the week. There's a decent soft drinks and wine list plus the Glasshouse Bar menu to peruse, and we tried a glass of house white (the Moulin de Gassac costing £7.50 each).

The different stations are laid out fairly clearly, and there are small blackboards describing what everything is plus the all-important allergy and dietary information. The central island houses the sushi station, seafood, salads, antipasti, soup and cheese (e.g. Cheddar and Wigmore). This is bordered by the Robata grill serving marinated meat and fish, and the separate carnivorous area offering the likes of lamb chops with a herb crust (which my other half tried and enjoyed) plus Tomahawk steaks. In the middle of the top section, there's the newly-introduced stone oven where you'll find a constant top-up of sizzling pizza slices.



Sitting next to that is another addition to the refurbished Glasshouse, the fresh pasta station.

Here you can choose from a few different varieties and other bits to go with it such as mushrooms, chopped tomato, prawns and chicken pieces.

As there is only one chef preparing each bespoke dish, you do have to queue on a Saturday night, and as they use rapeseed oil to heat up the pasta, followed by another dose of olive oil to finish things off, the result of my tagliatelle with a lightly flavoured pesto was quite a greasy dish, so this is something to bear in mind if you're a fan of Italian cuisine like me. At the far end, the chefs will conjure up a fresh Asian noodle soup, and there's also a Tandoori station hosting Indian delicacies, as well as sides of naan bread, mint chutney and raita.

Having satisfied our sweet tooth, we were truly defeated and finished off the evening with a pot of Moroccan mint tea before calling it a night. Although The Glasshouse is a very busy venue for dinner, with people literally coming and going all the time, the service provided by the staff was attentive throughout, and they did everything to ensure that our experience was as memorable as possible, and for the right reasons. This approach was in fact echoed across the hotel.



After a decent night's sleep, breakfast, which costs £28 per head if not included in the room rate, is served back at The Glasshouse from 07:00 at the weekend, and is purely for the reserve of hotel residents only on a Saturday and Sunday. The dinner stations are magically transformed to ensure that guests get the very best start to the day.



There are of course the vital ingredients for a hearty English, several types of fresh bread and cheese, a cold meat platter and a range of juices. Having eaten well the night before, it was a challenge to take full advantage of what was laid before us, but we nevertheless managed to enjoy a freshly-made cheese, mushroom and onion omelette, and dairy-free pancakes. Both were excellent.



Sequoia Spa.

Exercising

There's no excuse to be lazy when visiting The Grove. As well as the championship standard 7,152-yard golf course, the award-winning Sequoia Spa is the main fitness hub at The Grove.

Located at the eastern end of the hotel, it boasts a 22-metre black mosaic-tiled pool where you can put in a few lengths beneath the wooden beams or climb into the Jacuzzi which lies at the foot of the pool by the steam room and sauna. There's also a fully-equipped fitness studio to help burn off the calories or to put in a few miles, and although we didn't have the opportunity to sample them during our stay, there are various spa treatments and experiences available thanks to its comprehensive menu of luxury packages.

When the weather's nice, it's also worth having a meander around the grounds which feature a plethora of interesting and artistic sculptures to peer at and giant deck chairs to sit in.

The Walled Garden, accessible via your room card, includes a "beach" area, plus an outdoor pool for those feeling brave enough to put in some lengths beneath the sky. Alternatively, there's giant chess, badminton, football and table tennis to get into the competitive spirit. The Walled Garden is also where you will find the outdoor cinema experience which is running for the whole of the month of August in conjunction with Everyman. Tickets will be available for hotel residents and guests on cinema dining packages only.



Whilst you're there enjoying the various facilities on offer, it's also worth taking a walk around the kitchen garden which has been populated with a fascinating array of different vegetables and herbs that are used by The Grove's numerous chefs. During our visit, we bumped into one of them energetically cutting thyme sprigs for use in fish and meat marinades, before disappearing to a more secluded spot of the Walled Garden to collect his rosemary.

The Grove has always been one of the sparkling jewels in Hertfordshire's hospitality crown. Although there's room for improvement, this five-star hotel still has plenty going for it and is definitely a special venue to get away from the daily grind. If it's just to relax and do nothing or to put in a few lengths, miles or yards to keep fit, The Grove certainly has it covered.

The Grove and The Glasshouse – Where and How?

The Grove is located at Chandler's Cross, Watford, Hertfordshire WD3 4TG, United Kingdom. For more information about The Grove and The Glasshouse restaurant, visit: www.thegrove.co.uk or call 01923 296010.

Check out images from our stay at The Grove on the Luxurious Magazine Instagram page.

By Simon Wittenberg

CHILTERN CHATTER

26th JULY / MUU: 6,000



EVERYMAN PRESENTS... SECRET GARDEN AT THE GROVE

Jul 16, 2019 | Eat & drink, Explore, Local Life | 0 | ★★★★★



August is nearly upon us, which can mean only one thing – it's officially Summer!

Everyman Cinema will be taking over the Secret Garden at The Grove Hotel this August bringing the first every outdoor cinema to the hotel. Head along between 1 – 31 August 2019 (Wednesday – Sunday) and enjoy a pre-screening dinner at The Glasshouse or The Stables, followed by a film at the Everyman pop up cinema in the Walled Garden.



Guests are invited to settle in amid the greenery and enjoy the show in the sun or snuggle under the stars – you decide. Featuring a selection of classic and newly released films including: A Star is Born, ET, The Secret Garden, Fight Club, Black Panther, Gone Girl, Matilda, Peter Rabbit, Leon, The Greatest Showman and lots more (see full list of films and dates here)

TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE FOR HOTEL RESIDENTS AND GUESTS ON CINEMA DINING PACKAGES. SUPPER & THE CINEMA AT THE GLASSHOUSE STARTS AT £59 PER ADULT AND £30 PER CHILD. SUPPER & THE CINEMA AT THE STABLES SUPPER AND CINEMA PACKAGES START AT £45 PER ADULT AND £22 PER CHILD.

Book offer here or Call 01923 296010

MUDDY STILETTOS

29th JULY / MUU: 30,840

Muddy Stilettos

THE URBAN GUIDE TO THE COUNTRYSIDE = HERTS & BEDS

Muddy reviews: The Grove, Chandler's Cross, Hertfordshire

Known as London's country estate, The Grove in Hertfordshire is an elegant rural mansion house with a cool urban vibe. Sounds like the best of both worlds, right? I checked in to find out...

24 Jul 2019



THE LOWDOWN



'It's the golf hotel, right?' asks my husband as we turn into the entrance to The Grove. Errr, ok, so I *might* have missed that bit when I was ogling over the pictures of the uber-cool interiors, gorgeous gardens, mouth-watering food, and, of course, the spa (*ohhh*, the spa!).

'Yeah, sure!' I confidently reply as we make our way up the drive, trying to avoid the low flying golf balls – turns out that you can't really miss the Championship green (all 7,000 yards of it – even Tiger's played here!). But, in my defence, there's far more to this five-star hotel than golf.

Just outside of Watford and only 18 miles from the capital The Grove is an idyllic private oasis – the former private home of the Earls of Clarendon, set within 300 acres of rolling countryside – hence its tagline, 'London's Country Estate'. And once you've arrived there's really no need to leave (well, you might have to drag me away kicking and screaming), as we quickly discovered.

THE VIBE



Naturally it's a honeypot for those tanktop-wearing types, but The Grove also attracts its fair share of celebs (I spotted June Sarpong at check-in – now there's a '90s throwback for you!) Seriously though, Kylie, Tom Cruise and the Beckhams are fans. And, being a quick nip down the M1 into West London – yep, it's actually inside the M25! – the London set are all over it, too.

It's part-country-estate-part-design-hotel – think grand Grade II-listed mansion with a curious combination of traditional features and funky abstract art at every turn (stiletto-wearing giraffes and videos of nude gardeners projected on the walls, anyone?!) It's all the award-winning work of interior designer, Martin Hulbert, who's recently transformed the Glasshouse restaurant, too.



Animal print AND stilettos – my kind of art!

Then there's the more contemporary 'West Wing', where you'll find the majority of the rooms – over 200 of them in fact – this is where The Grove's events offering comes into its own as it's perfectly set up to host corporate parties and weddings in its 28 flexible event spaces. It might lack some of the character of the trad heart of the hotel, but it's still got those natty artistic quirks, plus plenty of five-star flair (if just a *teensy* bit blingy, with areas named things like Onyx and Crystal – ok, ok, I was spoiled rotten with my Mansion Suite...)

MUDDY STILETTOS

29th JULY / MUU: 30,840

Muddy Stilettos

THE URBAN GUIDE TO THE COUNTRYSIDE - HERTS & BEDS



The mansion rooms overlook this pretty courtyard.

Outside you could amble about for hours in the formal gardens, which are choc-full of contemporary sculptures, water features, topiary and unusual planting schemes.

But the Walled Garden (open April – September) is a real treat, with its rambling summer roses and swathes of lavender. Inside the gates you'll find the kitchen garden, where the hotel chefs source ingredients for their dishes (and, ahem, cocktails). I wanted to go home immediately and grow my own plump purple artichokes and salad leaves in cute concentric circles.



Then there's The Potting Shed, a glasshouse which spans the entire width of the garden and includes a restaurant and chill-out area, bursting with rustic features (all my reclamation yard dreams come true!) and pots of greenery tumbling out everywhere – it looks just gorgeous set up for a wedding breakfast, too.

The restaurant only pops up between July and September but you can always pull up rattan armchair and settle in for a game of Boggle for the afternoon. Or if you're feeling (slightly) more energetic try a spot of croquet or giant chess on the lawn. Oh and there are courts for tennis and badminton and even a small football pitch, too.



The star of the show though is the beach (we're still in the Walled Garden, by the way) – yes, there's a real sandy beach, complete with deckchairs, beach huts and volleyball nets AND an outdoor pool, which looks sooo inviting in the sunshine. I left the hubs there (no protests from him), while I slunk off to have my spa treatment (lucky me!).



On that note the Sequoia spa is just dreamy, but you'll have to wait for my review on that one to hear more... (I know, the suspense is killing you!)

MUDDY STILETTOS

29th JULY / MUU: 30,840

Muddy Stilettos

THE URBAN GUIDE TO THE COUNTRYSIDE - HERTS & BEDS

PILLOW TALK

I might well have done a little audible squeal when the receptionist gave us the key to our Mansion Suite – one of just twelve, accessed via a labyrinthine corridor cloaked in black velvet. Our Executive Suite was approximately the size of the first flat we rented in London.



Sash windows with panoramic views over those fabulous formal gardens ('yeah, hi there other hotel guests – this is *our* room, don'cha know!'), a gigantic four poster, a dressing room, and Champers on arrival (ok, that might not have come as standard).

It was possibly one of the best night's sleep I've ever had despite waking up at 6am to the sunshine streaming through the window – but I was glad I did as the gardens looked just magical in the morning light. ESPA toiletries and fluffy robes completed the package. Oh yes, I could get used to this (a girl can dream, right?)



Now that's a view worth waking up for!

SCOFF AND QUAFF

We were lucky enough to have timed our visit just as the brand spanking new Glasshouse Restaurant opened its doors. It's had a major refurb and is drop dead gorgeous. It's designed to be a 'theatre of food' with a number of live cooking stations to visit – pile your plate high as you dare with smokey meats, wood fired pizzas, handmade pasta and tandoori dishes.

It's one of the fanciest foodhalls I've ever been to, that's for sure! Check out my [full review here](#).



The Glasshouse Bar is definitely worth a visit, too, with its creative list of cocktails (remember those homegrown ingredients?). We chose a table by the floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the stunning gardens, which are dotted with twinkly lights by night – mucho romantics!

Our hangovers were ready for the multitude of breakfast options come morning – exotic fruit platters, the prettiest pastries and oodles of granola, yogurt and fresh honeycomb to gorge on – and that's all before the cooked breakfast. I ordered eggs florentine which was freshly prepared in front of me at one of the live cooking stations, and had to tear myself away from the hash browns. Oh ok then, just one...

For lunch – because, frankly, it would have been rude not to – we checked out the more informal Stables restaurant, which has got the feel of a gastro-pub-cum-golf-country-club. We opted for a mix of light starters to share (after all, breakfast was only three hours ago!) – Burrata, crab arancini and a pear and walnut salad – all beautifully prepared, fresh and zingy.

MUDDY STILETTOS

29th JULY / MUU: 30,840

Muddy Stilettos

THE URBAN GUIDE TO THE COUNTRYSIDE - HERTS & BEDS



One of the lighter dishes at The Stables – artichokes from the garden perhaps?

Oh, and if afternoon tea is more up your street, you can get the whole shebang in the Lounges, which are packed with arty talking points and overlook the formal gardens. There are veggie, vegan, Champagne and children's options to boot.

And you don't have to stay overnight to dine here. In fact throughout August, there's a fab Supper and Cinema package which combines dinner at the Glasshouse or Stables plus tickets to an outdoor cinema screening in the walled garden – sounds brill! Check out the film schedule [here](#).

KID FRIENDLY?

Contrary to what you might expect, this place is made for families – in fact I almost felt guilty about leaving our daughter with the grandparents (*almost!*) You can request cots, bunk beds and even toy boxes in your room. It's even got its own day nursery, Anoushka's, (with a dedicated tots' pool) and babysitting service if you want a romantic dinner à deux.



I've already waxed lyrical about the walled garden, but it's a paradise for kids too – with the pool, beach and garden games – and there's loads more to explore in the grounds, from woodland walking trails, bikes to hire (all ages catered for), and you can even let them loose on a segway (with a qualified guide, of course).



Plus, there are junior golf camps, teen spa treatments and the new children's afternoon tea, complete with a Unicorn petit gateau. *Too* cute!

THE MUDDY VERDICT:

Good for: Families looking for a luxe UK break that's got it all in one place; Couples after a romantic getaway; wedding parties; groups of golfing pals; design mavens; garden lovers – basically there isn't anyone I can think of who wouldn't love it here! Top tip – I'd highly recommend choosing one of the 12 mansion suites (if you can stretch to it) for the full country house hotel experience.

Not for: Those simply looking for somewhere to crash for the night – there's sooo much to do here, it would be a shame not to make the most of it.

The damage: Bearing in mind that it's a five-star hotel, prices start at a fairly affordable £290 per night on a B&B basis, (with dinner at the Glasshouse from £49 pp) and go up to a more back-pocket-stinging £1000+ for a Presidential Suite in peak season. Maybe one for a special occasion though, eh...?

The Grove, Chandler's Cross, Hertfordshire, WD3 4TG. Tel: 01923 807807.

freetime

Friday, July 26, 2019

YOUR LOCAL LEISURE GUIDE

Pop-up cinema in hotel's walled garden

THE Grove has announced a partnership with cinema specialists, Everyman, to provide a pop-up cinema for its guests to enjoy this summer.

Throughout the entire month of August, hotel residents and restaurant guests at the five-star hotel in Hertfordshire will be able to enjoy a variety of popular, classic films as well as new releases in its secluded Walled Garden, complete with bean bags, delicious snacks and beverages.

Secret Garden will be the overarching theme of the pop-up cinema - with many films a nod to the lush English garden surroundings. The programming schedule will include a mixture of family-friendly films, new releases and well-known classics. Up to 45 films will be screened throughout the month, with evening screenings from Wednesday to Sunday, together with selected matinee viewings and late night screenings. A snapshot of the films on offer include:

Matinees (exclusively for hotel residents) - Saturday-Sunday 3.30pm. Family friendly films, available for hotel residents, including The Secret Garden, Beauty & The Beast, Matilda, Jungle Book, Peter Rabbit, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Coco, The BFG and Mary Poppins Returns.

Evening Screenings - Wednesday-Sunday 8.00pm. Aimed at 12+ audience with a more family-friendly accent at the weekends, including E.T., Jumanji, Isle of Dogs, Black Panther, La La Land, Pride & Prejudice, Dirty Dancing, Back to the Future, The Greatest Showman, Mean Girls, Wonder Woman, Sleepless in Seattle, Bohemian Rhapsody, Mrs Doubtfire, Jurassic Park, Green Book, Captain Marvel and Forrest Gump.

Late Night Screenings - Friday-Saturday 10.45pm. Expect thrills, frights and sheer pleasure in these spine-tingling screenings, including The Beach, Fight Club, Donnie Darko, Gone Girl, AMY, The Blair Witch Project, Leon, A Star is Born, US and True Romance.

Films will be aired on a large screen within The Grove's enchanting Walled Garden, which is hidden behind the grand gates in the heart of the hotel's 300 acres. The Walled Garden's kitchen garden and Potting Shed provide the picturesque backdrop for the cinema, creating the perfect haven for guests to relax on a summer evening. Alongside the cinema, there will be a pop-up Tanqueray Bar, a Grove Shack serving vodka slushies as well as a selection of popcorn, ice cream and old-fashioned sweets for guests to enjoy during the screenings.

The Grove has an abundance of activities on offer throughout the summer season.



The pop-up cinema is part of The Grove Hotel's programme of events

catering for couples and families alike, which will ensure that guests can grab a little respite from the city, with travel time from Central London taking little over 20 minutes. The Glasshouse restaurant has also recently reopened following extensive refurbishment.

The Grove's pop-up cinema will run from

Thursday, August 1, to Saturday, August 31. Inclusive overnight hotel packages invite guests to experience the cinema at their leisure, with packages also available for guests dining at The Glasshouse or The Stables.

For more information visit www.thegrove.co.uk or call 01923 296010.



The cinema will be set up in The Grove's Walled Garden

Popular music and dance festival returns



JiveSwing Festival is free to attend

WATFORD Borough Council's Big JiveSwing Festival returns to the bandstand in Cassiobury Park on Sunday, July 28, from 1pm to 6pm. The historic Watford landmark will host some of the best internationally acclaimed jazz musicians, bands and dancers during the afternoon extravaganza. There will be live cabarets, dance classes for children and adults, professional dance displays, a vintage photo booth and more - all for free.

Elected Mayor of Watford Peter Taylor said: "It's great to be able to host our Big Jive Swing Festival for another year. I'm really pleased that despite cuts in our funding from government that we are able to put on events like these ones free of charge for local residents. Bring your family and friends, and make the most of this fantastic musical festival!"

Bands performing include the Mississippi Swing Band, Pete Long Swing Band, The Jive Aces and The Colin Bray Swing Band.

Big Bandstand - part of the Watford Borough Council's Big Events programme - will host live bands, performing for free, every Sunday from 2pm to 4pm until September.

You can view the full line-up on the Watford Big Events website and find out more about the Big JiveSwing festival at watfordbigevents.co.uk/bigjiveswingfestival

Over the weekend of Saturday, July 27, and Sunday, July 28, the British Firefighter Challenge is also taking place on Watford High Street and by The Parade. This annual sporting event, being held for the first time in Watford, will see over 250 firefighters from 16 countries being pushed to their limits as they compete in gruelling tasks. Come along with your family and friends and watch, and help raise funds for the Firefighters Charity. Children can even take part in mini games. Find out more at britishfirefighterchallenge.co.uk

Watford Observer

NEWS

29th July

Pop-up cinema in The Grove Hotel's walled garden to show family favourite films

By Kelly Pells



     0 comment

The Grove, a five-star hotel in Hertfordshire, has announced a partnership with cinema specialists, Everyman, to provide a pop-up cinema for its guests to enjoy this summer.

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• Evening Screenings – Wednesday-Sunday 8.00pm. Aimed at 12+ audience with a more family-friendly accent at the weekends, including *E.T.*, *Jumanji*, *Isle of Dogs*, *Black Panther*, *La La Land*, *Pride & Prejudice*, *Dirty Dancing*, *Back to the Future*, *The Greatest Showman*, *Mean Girls*, *Wonder Woman*, *Sleepless in Seattle*, *Bohemian Rhapsody*, *Mrs Doubtfire*, *Jurassic Park*, *Green Book*, *Captain Marvel* and *Forrest Gump*.

• Late Night Screenings – Friday-Saturday 10.45pm. Expect thrills, frights and sheer pleasure in these spine-tingling screenings, including *The Beach*, *Fight Club*, *Donnie Darko*, *Gone Girl*, *AMY*, *The Blair Witch Project*, *Leon*, *A Star is Born*, *US* and *True Romance*.

Films will be aired on a large screen within The Grove's enchanting Walled Garden, which is hidden behind the grand gates in the heart of the hotel's 300 acres. The Walled Garden's kitchen garden and Potting Shed provide the picturesque backdrop for the cinema, creating the perfect haven for guests to relax on a summer evening. Alongside the cinema, there will be a pop-up Tanqueray Bar, a Ciroc Shack serving vodka slushies as well as a selection of popcorn, ice cream and old-fashioned sweets for guests to enjoy during the screenings.

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For more information visit www.thegrove.co.uk or call 01923 296010.

Lifestyle › Travel

The Grove is just the place for a secret getaway

This smart retreat offers an escape from city life but it is less than 15 minutes from central London...

AMIRA HASHISH | 3 days ago | 0 comments



The Grove - in pictures



Anything else I should know? The hotel is launching its first outdoor cinema throughout August. The secret garden themed pop-up is showing family-friendly films such as Matilda and The Jungle Book as well as classics like Dirty Dancing and Pride and Prejudice. Set in the Walled Garden, there is an outdoor pool and private urban beach with bean bags, snacks and drinks. Overnight hotel packages invite guests to experience the cinema at their leisure, with packages also available for guests dining at The Glasshouse or The Stables.

Discover a secret garden on the outskirts of London...

Where? Set in 300 acres of Hertfordshire countryside. Just 18 miles from central London it takes 14 minutes to get there by train from Euston but feels like a sprawling countryside retreat.

The lowdown: the former home of the Earls of Clarendon now houses a [spa](#), championship golf course and excellent restaurants.

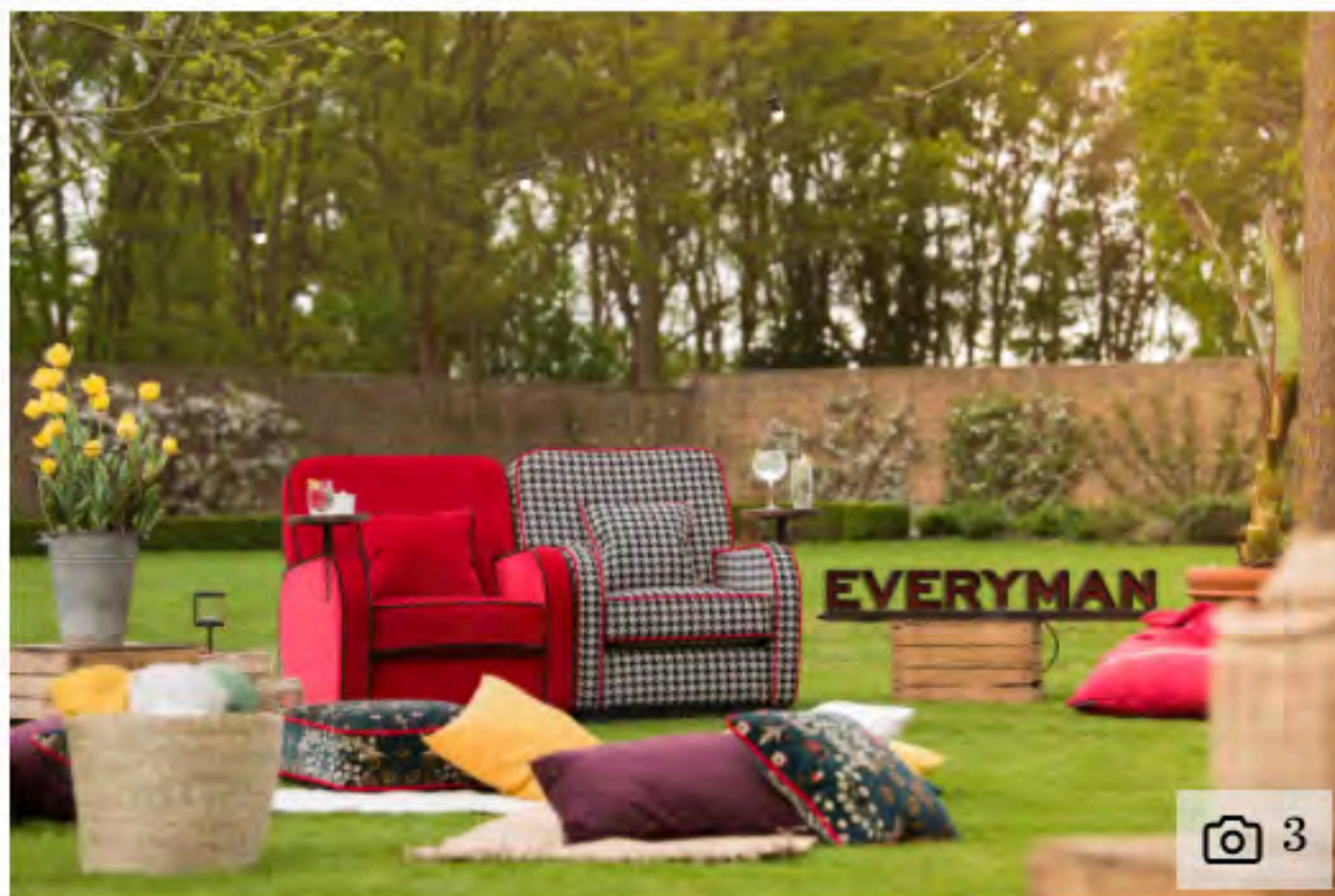
What room? There is a room to suit every kind of lifestyle, from family to dog friendly. Styles include the more traditional Grade II listed mansion rooms or the contemporary West Wing. We enjoyed a modern option with doors that opened directly onto the gardens. A great outlook and a lovely setting to soak up before a stroll around the grounds. The ESPA toiletries are refreshing and there is complimentary WiFi.

On the menu: There are several food and drink options on site. The Glasshouse has recently been renovated, there are seasonal dishes at The Stables or finger sandwiches and delicate pastries as part of the afternoon tea. Pop up restaurant The Potting Shed is returning to the Walled Garden this July. Beautifully kitted out with plants, the menu is carefully curated with fresh ingredients.

EVENING STANDARD ONLINE

29th JULY / MUU: 18,880,050

EveningStandard.
WEBSITE OF THE YEAR



Get pampered: The Sequoia Spa is a stylish space with a black mosaic-tiled pool, heat experience rooms and specialist treatment options. Take a dip and book a mindful massage, designed to relieve stress with a holistic experience by ESPA.



Pet friendly: Dog owners will appreciate the pooch package that includes a box with a toy, a mitt and towel to clean muddy paws and bio-degradable poop bags. Welcome dog packs can be purchased for £35 and also include treats, a bed and a trails map of walking routes around The Grove's estate and through the surrounding woodland. Dogs are not allowed in the restaurants but they are allowed on the terraces. Rather handily, there is a concierge team who offer dog sitting duties if booked in advance.

How do I book? visit thegrove.co.uk. ■

ALL IN LONDON

31st JULY / MUU: 1,600,000



London. Honestly.

The countryside escape mere minutes from London

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Posted by *A Londoner Travels* on Sunday 28th of July 2019



As a time-poor Londoner I can't be the only one who's often craving a Friday getaway from the city; a countryside escape to take you from desk to spa with as little effort as possible. Lucky for us the glorious Grove in Hertfordshire ticks all of those boxes and more.

Within an hour of leaving my desk after another manic Friday, I was flopped on my bed, with the hardest decision ahead of me whether to hit the spa or the buffet first. A short train ride from Euston and a ten minute taxi from Watford Junction station, The Grove hotel is set amid 300 acres of Hertfordshire countryside and the resort features three unique restaurants, an award-winning spa and a championship golf course. It's less than sixty minutes from London and yet it feels a world away.

The original building dates from the 1500s, but today boasts a modern extension and 215 rooms, ranging from Deluxe in either the original Mansion House or contemporary West Wing, overlooking the garden, to a vast Presidential suite with its bay-fronted window and marble bathroom. We found ourselves in the former, with its French windows overlooking the formal gardens, crisp king size and roll top bath surrounded by luxurious ESPA toiletries, calling out my name for a post-prandial soak.

Agreeing to leave the spa for the morning, we headed downstairs to The Glasshouse, a lavish dining theatre that will put any buffet you've ever visited to shame. The restaurant features eight live food stations with chefs constantly preparing an overwhelming option of delicious, international cuisines. A word to the wise; ensure you do a lap before committing to your dining plan, this much delicious food needs a strategy.

We started at the crustacean station, piling plates high with fresh oysters, juicy prawns and sushi rolls, leaving a little sliver for some of the delicious, crisp, fresh salads. Next up was a custom creation of Asian soup, a hearty bowl of mushrooms, egg, chicken, seaweed and crispy onion in a warming broth. We skipped the roast dinners and pasta station - against my better judgement - and headed to the robata grill to pick up a couple of lobster tails, before hitting the dessert trolley hard...

There is a slight possibility we overindulged at this stage, given I selected a coconut and Malibu sponge, rose lychee mousse, crème brûlée and a dish of three flavours of ice cream, drizzled with hot molten chocolate and covered in mini meringues, chocolate balls, crunchy biscotti and nuts like the overexcited five year old I clearly am inside. Nevertheless, glutton or no, it was delicious.

Post dinner take to the formal gardens for a digestion-aiding stroll; brimming with rose gardens, contemporary art and unique water features, they even lit a crackling bonfire for guests to sit and enjoy with a drink on the terrace. Inside you'll also find several stunning lounges; packed with art, beautiful chandeliers, board games and log fires in the winter, there's something quirky in every corner.

Alas, after such a feast it wasn't long before we retired. After a much anticipated bubble bath I crawled into bed in my robe ready for a movie, only to disappointingly find the only options were pay to view. Disappointing that such a luxury hotel didn't have any movie options on the TV at all; thankfully I'd brought along my laptop and ergo Netflix, so not all was lost and we eventually drifted into a peaceful slumber to the dulcet tones of Bridget Jones.

Saturday morning dawned bright and sunny and feeling revived after an early night, it was time to hit the gym and spa. With its black mosaic-tiled pool, heat experience rooms and specialist treatment options, the award winning Sequoia spa is an experience like no other. There's a state of the art fitness studio, programme of exercise classes, indoor pool, jacuzzi, sauna and steam room, the ideal circuit for a relaxing Saturday morning. Hotel guests can enjoy use of the facilities included with their room, while there's a range of day use and treatment packages for those wanting to indulge in a special treat. I adored having the pool to myself at 7.30am, swimming my lengths and getting a steam in before wrapping myself up in a robe and poring over the Saturday papers.

During the warmer months however there's also another special something The Grove has up its sleeve, in the form of its heated outdoor pool. Situated within the Walled garden, a secluded outdoor space, it's also neighboured by a 'beach' complete with deckchairs and volleyball court. The sun blazed on the morning of our visit, and combined with the dazzling warm water it felt like we could have been abroad, not in the middle of Hertfordshire. What a treat.

Our swimming time was going so well we almost missed breakfast; particularly as the receptionist unhelpfully told us the wrong end time, something which also wasn't noted in any in-room correspondence. As such we were left with ten minutes to rush around The Glasshouse, grabbing from its array of breakfast spoils, when had we been a tad earlier we could have enjoyed a leisurely a la carte fare of The Stables. Given we were the last ones in we were somewhat left with the dregs; eggs en cocote that had unfortunately solidified in their time under the lamp, the last few pancakes that were more than a tad limp, dishes that were supposed to be hot but were anything but; at least the pastry basket was still going strong. It would have been nice to at least have one chef perhaps still at his station, willing to make something hot and fresh for those guests who may have lost track of time rather than us settling for the rubbery leftovers, though I guess lesson learnt to not leave breakfast until the last minute next time...

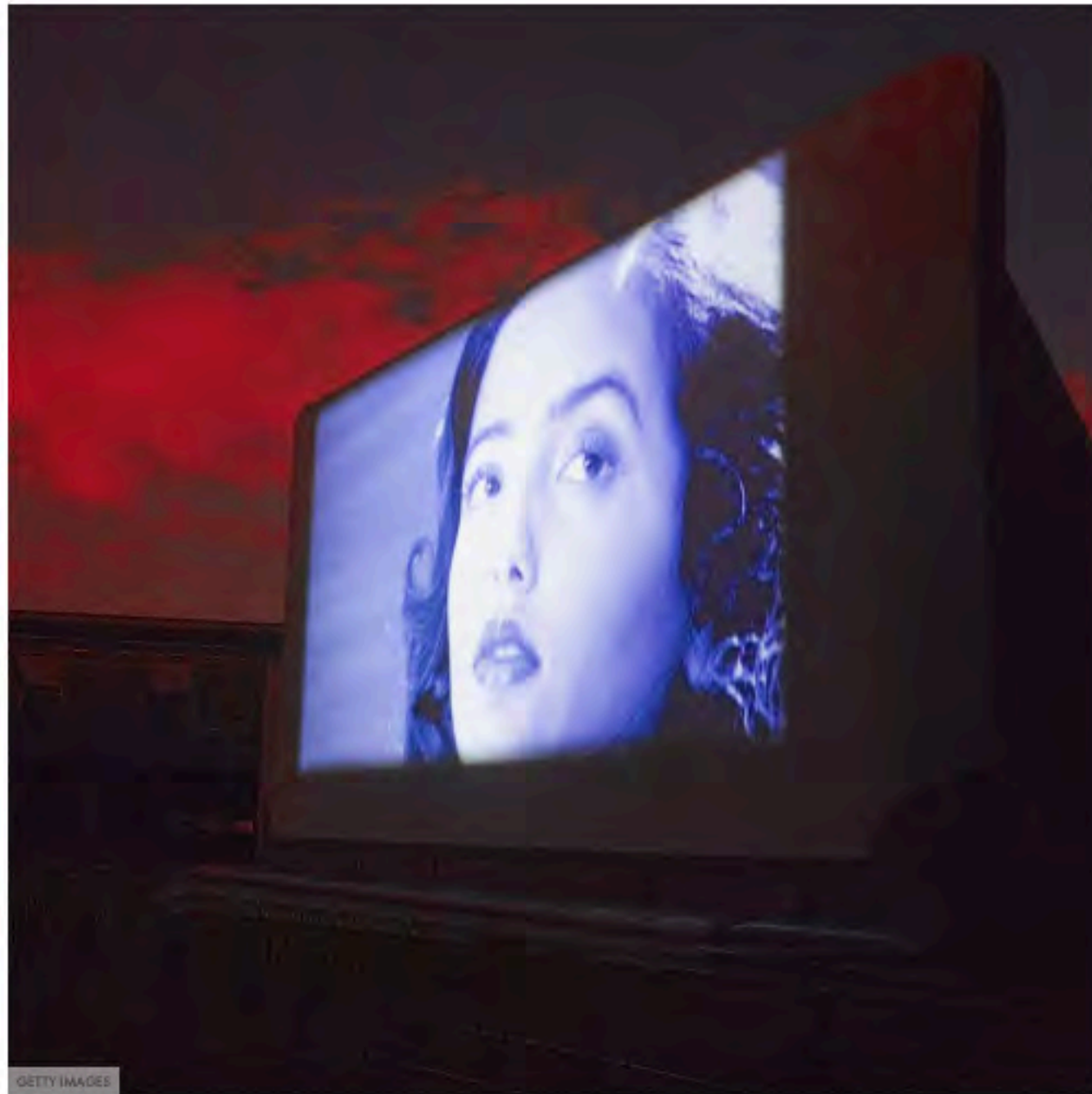
Breakfast aside, a night at The Grove was the perfect tonic for a busy working week in London; we were both astounded at how close it was. Guests staying or dining at The Glasshouse or The Stables through August will also be able to enjoy the hotel's first pop up cinema, in partnership with Everyman. With a range of popular and classic films as well as new releases, the secluded Walled Garden will be filled with bean bags, delicious snacks and beverages, with up to 45 films screened throughout the month. There will be evening screenings from Wednesday to Sunday from 1st to 31st August, together with selected matinee viewings and late night screenings. It certainly sounds like a dream addition to a gorgeous summer getaway.



The Best Outdoor Cinemas In London

Your guide to seeing this summer's finest open-air movies.

ELLE BY ELLE UK 29/07/2019



What with the never-ending sunshine (we're not complaining, just cooler than 38 degrees please!), there's no reason why you shouldn't be spending lots of time outside enjoying it. Enter the the capital's huge array of pop-up outdoor cinemas and rooftop film screenings. Whether you're into the classics or latest release, here are the best outdoor cinemas that London has to offer.

9. Secret Garden at The Grove



BLAKE EZZAR PHOTOGRAPHS 2018

Okay, so The Grove is technically in Hertfordshire, but this will be well worth your time. The luxury hotel has launched a secret garden themed pop-up cinema, in partnership with Everyman. Watch class like *Dirty Dancing* and *Pride & Prejudice* under the stars –surrounded by an outdoor pool and private urban beach, complete with bean bags, snacks, a Tanqueray Bar and Ciroc Shack serving vodka slushies. For ticket info click [here](#).

Where: Hertfordshire

When: Throughout August