

Up in the air: Ten treehouse holidays - for pirates, parents and eternal teenagers

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They are a classic symbol of Boys' Own adventure, lofty DIY palaces removed from parental authority (or, at least, stuck at the other end of the lawn), where comics can be read and youthful schemes plotted for all eternity – or until teatime, whichever is sooner.

But lately, the humble treehouse has developed into more than a ladder-accessed refuge from homework and little sisters. It has become an increasingly popular idea as a holiday venue – in demand among families and couples who want to stay in a different sort of room-with-a-view. And not just in corners of the British countryside, but in places as distant as Kenya, India and the Amazon – as these ten tempting treehouse breaks show...



Plane amazing: The Executive Suite 727 treehouse, in Costa Rica, comprises the fuselage of a Boeing 727

Somerset

What's the vibe? A high level of sophistication – quite literally

Wrapped around a lime tree on a working farm near Taunton in Somerset, The Treehouse (01823 431622, www.treehouseholidays.com) falls safely within the 'does what it says on the tin' bracket. But this is no dusty shed balanced on a gnarly limb. The owners market their baby as 'Britain's first five-star self-catering treehouse' – and back up their claim with mod-cons including an open-plan kitchen, a hot tub and a master bedroom accessed by a spiral staircase (though the property sleeps five in total). The boast has fallen on receptive ears – The Treehouse is largely booked up for the rest of the year – but Christmas Week (December 20-27) is still available, at £1250 (one-week stays from £790 at other times).

France

What's the vibe? Family fun, French flair – and Pieces Of Eight

Blessed with an excitable brood? There's a hint of pirate mischief – sure to keep kids entertained for days – about the treehouses available through Keycamp (0844 4060200, www.keycamp.co.uk). The camping specialists offer these wood dwellings – which, hanging five metres up between two trees, resemble buccaneer galleons – at six sites in northern France (in Brittany, the Vendée, the Jura, the Loire). Each sleeps six in thatched rooms at either end of a terrace (poop deck) – though parents (landlubbers) will note that a ground-level tent for cooking (and escape) is part of the deal. A seven-night stay for six next May half-term, in a treehouse at the Le Chateau des Marais site near Orleans, starts at £635.



Walk the plank: The treehouses offered by Keycamp in France have a pirate vibe

Cornwall, Gloucestershire and Yorkshire

What's the vibe? If you go down to the woods today...

Another possibility for a highly-strung family break is Forest Holidays (0845 1308225, www.forestholidays.co.uk) – a company that offers cabin getaways at UK sites hidden amid the leafy scenery of Forestry Commission land. Three of these sites (Deerpark in Cornwall; Keldy, on the edge of the North York Moors National Park; Forest Of Dean Cabins in Gloucestershire) are hosts to 'Golden Oak Treehouses' – three-bedroom cabins that come with a treehouse extension, accessed by an 'adventurers' bridge' from the cabin terrace. The twist is that these en-suite add-ons are designed for two – so expect mum and dad to pull rank here. A four-night stay in a Golden Oak Treehouse at Deerpark starts at £336.

Sweden

What's the vibe? Scandinavian eccentricity meets cutting-edge architecture

The one problem with treehouses, you might argue, is that they always look like, well, treehouses. But this isn't the case at Treehotel, a willfully weird wonderland in the village of Harads, 40 miles south of the Arctic Circle in northern Sweden (0046-928-10403, www.treehotel.se). Here, a team of architects have created a collection of treehouses to utterly outlandish designs – such as The Mirrorcube (a box clad in mirrored glass

that reflects the forest around it, but also sleeps two – £363 per night) and The Bird's Nest (which appears to be a giant black mess of twigs assembled by beak, but actually serves a family of four – £330 a night). Scandinavian Airlines (0871 2267760, www.flysas.com) flies to Lulea, the nearest city (an hour's drive away), from Heathrow, (via Stockholm) for £206 return.

Argyll

What's the vibe? The Brothers Grimm with a Scottish accent

Those who like to feel fresh Scottish air in their lungs may fancy a visit to Kinlochlaich House (01631 730342, www.kinlochlaich-house.co.uk), a 17th-century listed building at Appin in the Western Highlands. These days it earns a crust as a holiday enclave within reach of mountains and sea, whose gardens are home to cottages, vegetable patches and a tennis court – as well as The Tree House, an octagonal structure that perches off the ground in an orchard. At first glance it looks like an apparition from a fairy tale, but it opens up to reveal a hideaway for two complete with staircase that twirls around the supporting oak trunk en route to an upper gallery. A three-night weekend stay in November costs £294.



Tree and easy: The Golden Oak Treehouses at Deerpark in Cornwall are set on Forestry Commission land

Peru

What's the vibe? Trapped in the world's greatest jungle – with silver service

For the ultimate treehouse stay, you probably need the ultimate trees – the Amazon Rainforest. Happily, the Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica, an eco-lodge in the Peruvian part of the world's greatest jungle (www.inkaterra.com), is of help here – thanks to its Canopy Tree House, which hovers 27 metres above the forest floor. This is half back-to nature bolthole (there is no electricity after dark, when light is provided by kerosene lamps), half luxury des-res (a butler will carry dinner up to you while you watch for rare wildlife below). Sunvil Traveller (020 87584774, www.sunvil.co.uk) does a 10-night Peru trip that features four nights in the Canopy Tree House. From £3000 per person, including flights and transfers.

Kenya

What's the vibe? Robinson Crusoe gets stranded on Africa's east coast

Honeymooners who want to recline among the branches might fancy the Cove Retreat – a tiny four-star resort on a quiet stretch of Diani Beach, on Kenya's Indian Ocean shore. Six treehouses are tucked into sturdy Baobab trees, each with air-conditioned bedroom, four-poster bed, jacuzzi and – as with Inkaterra – a butler to bring dinner to your elevated residence. Africa Sky (0870 9040925, www.africasky.co.uk) does a 14-night Kenya Tree House Adventure package – departures in October from £2299 per person (based on two sharing), including flights, 13 nights' all-inclusive layover at the Cove Retreat, and one night in a similar treehouse at the Sable Valley resort, an hour inland in the Shimba Hills.

Costa Rica

What's the vibe? Lost transferred to Costa Rica – without the weirdness, with the plane

For the truly intrepid traveller, there is always the Hotel Costa Verde (www.costaverde.com), which overlooks the Manuel Antonio National Park on the Pacific coast of Costa Rica. Star attraction here is Executive Suite 727, a Boeing 727 whose fuselage has been wedged into the foliage, 15 metres up. But if you think this sounds too metallic to count as a treehouse, consider that the interior has been fitted out with teak, while a deck, placed on the wings, delivers glorious views of the ocean. Steppes Travel (01285 880980, www.steppestravel.co.uk) can arrange an 11-day Costa Rica tour that calls in at the suite for two nights (as well as at the active Arenal volcano) – from £2995 per person, with flights.



Bird's eye view: The Bird's Nest, at the Treehotel in Sweden, is made to a truly outlandish design

West Sussex

What's the vibe? The quintessential English country garden

Of course, you don't have to fly to Central America for great views. Coates Castle, a 19th century Gothic mansion, broods above the village of Coates in West Sussex, and proffers widescreen glimpses of the South Downs. Better still, Castle Cottage B&B, which sits on its estate (01798 865001, www.castlecottage.info), is another member of the accommodation-in-the-boughs club. The Tree House lies in the arms of a chestnut tree, and is big enough to comprise a double bedroom, an en-suite shower room and a balcony with swing seats – and is so authentic that it can be closed during foul weather (as every boy knows, you can't play in the tree house when it's raining). Overnight stays from £135, with breakfast.

India

What's the vibe? India at its prettiest – with plenty of peace and quiet

For those who want their treehouse stay to be a true Swiss Family Robinson experience, accompanied by those discreet twins peace and quiet, the Tranquil resort in southern India (www.tranquilresort.com) may be a fine choice. A 400-acre coffee and spice plantation in northern Kerala, this idyll has a treehouse that slots neatly into its surroundings – huddled beneath a Gul Mohr Tree, and supported 12 metres high by three other stout residents of the jungle. Within, you find bedroom, bathroom, and a veranda for whiling away the hours with scant evidence of modern life to bother you. A one-week full-board stay costs from £1875 per person, flights included, via Real Holidays (020 73593938, www.realholidays.co.uk).

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-1307418/Treehouse-holidays-Ten-breaks-branches-eternal-teenagers.html#ixzz11WlwtjVg>