



Fit for a princess

Retreat to the world of fairytales with a stay in this romantic woodland bothy

BY NICHOLA HUNTER, PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN MACNICOL

IF YOU'VE EVER DAYDREAMED of appearing in your own fairytale, the reality isn't that far away. You'll need to supply your own Prince Charming or Sleeping Beauty, but the fantasy location is just a phone call or e-mail away. The five-star Enterkine Country House Hotel at Annbank has long been established as an elegant weekend break destination. However, its latest project takes getting away from it all to a different level.

In the mature grounds of the hotel, a small wooden structure is tucked away among the trees. From the outside it looks like something from a children's storybook. The walls slope and the roof

curves and you wouldn't be terribly surprised if it grew legs and upped and walked away because you were staring at it. It's quirky, cute and unique.

Angela Tremble, sales and marketing manager at Enterkine, agrees: "It's like going back to childhood, it's just magical. When John Harris of the Bothy Lodge Company asked me to come and look at his new idea, I just thought it was unbelievable. I already knew John when he was with TreeHouse Company in Fenwick.

"He did some amazing treehouses, even ones which had kitchens with Agas in them, which were breathtaking. He did some barbecue houses as well,



which I loved. When he contacted me in November 2005 he took me to see the bothy. The one he showed me was a more contemporary one than what we've chosen for Enterkine but my reaction was just 'Wow!' It had a big leather bed with a pop-up television at the foot and it was stunning."

And the interiors of the bothies are as impressive as the exteriors. Once you open the solid cedar door and step inside, you see that you have everything you could possibly need.

"All of us at the hotel were a little sceptical about the size as it does look quite small externally, but the layout inside is brilliant and the space is

Clockwise from main: the bedroom, the bathroom, a chandelier; an ice bucket and Champagne glasses

incredible," says Tremble. "We've chosen the Romance design as there are different options. You enter through a little hall, through draped curtains. This means you're not walking straight into a bedroom and there's room here for an umbrella stand, coat hooks and a shoe rack. We've chosen to lay cream carpets in the lodge, so this is also where guests can change into the slippers provided for their stay.

"On the left of the lodge there's a seating area for two and on the right, a desk area and a mini-bar fridge. Tucked into the corner is a plasma screen on a folding arm, so it can be positioned to be seen from the bed or seating area."

Storage isn't an issue either, with drawers, wardrobes and bedside tables all easily accommodated. The large shower room houses a double-size Grohe shower and there's ample space for dressing and doing make-up.

The lodge is also very cosy due to thermostatically controlled underfloor heating and Argon gas-filled, double-glazed windows that absorb solar energy into the lodge and retain it. The construction ticks boxes on the environmental and maintenance fronts as well. The timber comes from sustainable sources and the Canadian cedar

shingle roof contains natural oils that protect it from the elements. The majority of the metalwork is solid copper, which will turn verdigris over time, and the sloping walls are made from heat-treated, low-maintenance Thermo wood from Scandinavia.

This attention to detail and workmanship is continued in the interior décor. Enterkine has customised the lodge with a colour scheme in keeping with the main hotel. Cream mohair throws and plump cushions in biscuit and duck egg blue complement the walnut veneer interior and fabric

"It's magical, like going back to childhood"



roof panels. And, as Tremble likes to use Ayrshire businesses where she can, the curtains and elegant cream wallpaper came from an interior design shop in Prestwick.

“Once you’re inside and close that door you could be anywhere,” she says. “There’s a TV, DVD, mini-bar and stereo. We can provide light snacks, room service and breakfast, and guests can also dine in the hotel, so there’s everything you need.

“For us, the lodge works on all

The exterior, main; design details, above from left: a tassel; cushions on the bed; pot pourri

levels. It immediately gave the hotel another bedroom, it was something totally different, and it just fitted our portfolio and the estate. Also, as the lodge is built on a stilt structure, it ensures the root structure of the trees around it isn’t affected. We really are very excited about this project.

“We’ve got planning permission for two lodges. We’re the first in the United Kingdom to have one and it’s really nice that the Bothy Lodge Company is an Ayrshire company and its

first one will be in Ayrshire. John Harris is a very clever man.”

He is indeed, especially if he can make a few fairytales come true ... **SM**

■ *A night in the Woodland Lodge at Enterkine Country House Hotel costs £195 for two people and includes full Scottish breakfast. Tel: 01292 520580 or visit www.enterkine.com*

■ *The Bothy Lodge Company, tel: 01560 601010 or visit www.bothylodge.com*



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