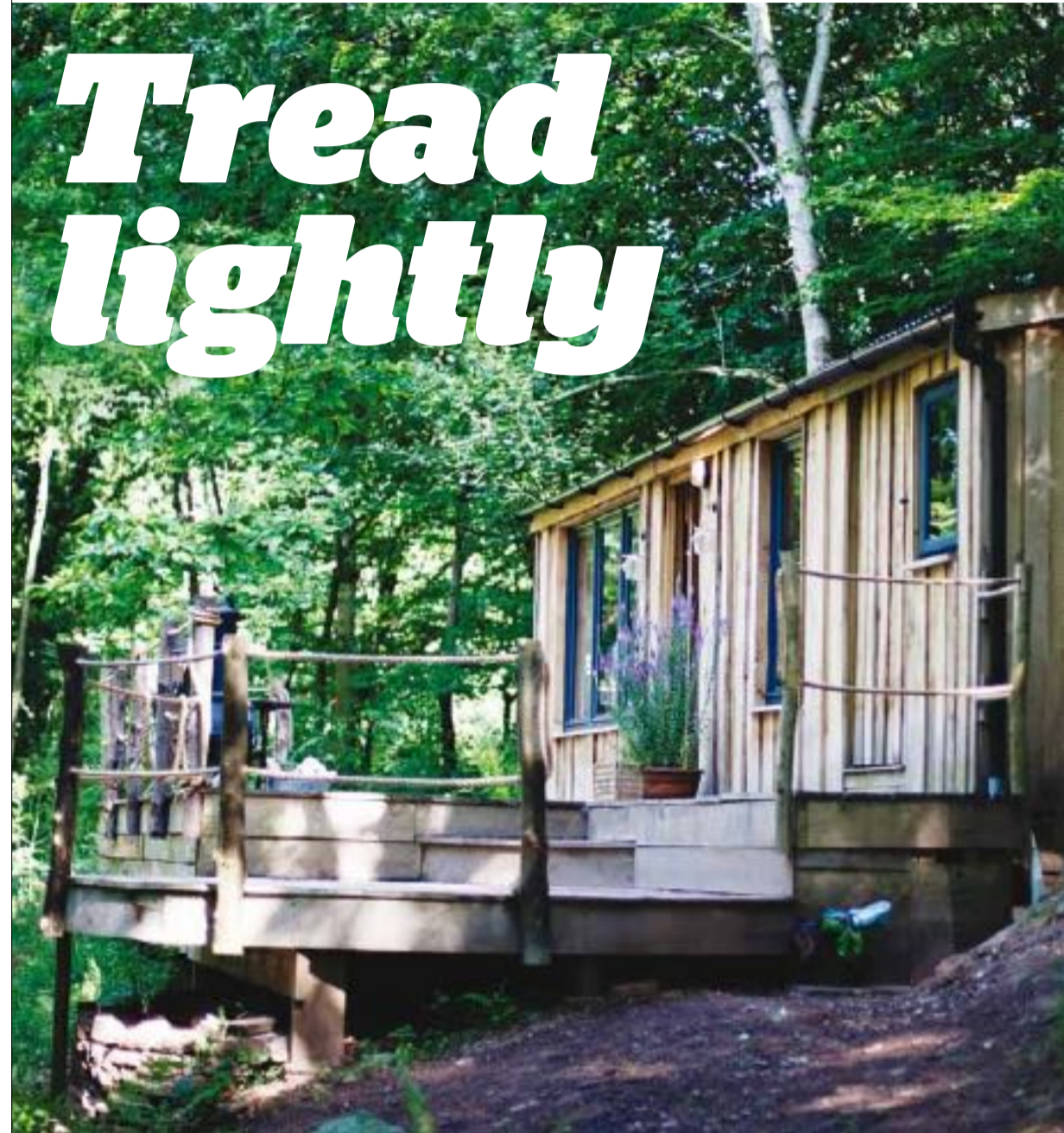


# Tread lightly



## EPIC RETREATS, CEREDIGION

These two luxury-camping cabins near the Ceredigion seaside town of New Quay are part-funded by the Welsh government as part of the "Year of Legends" celebration in 2017.

The Sky Hut is solar-powered and has a retractable roof for aspiring astronomers, with a log burner and snug Welsh blankets to accommodate all-season stays.

Meanwhile, Dragon's Eye riffs on the iconic Welsh dragon emblem with its fantastical folkloric design – including a rotating double bed, which should provide hours of entertainment. The two visions were crafted by architects Waind Gohil + Potter and Carwyn Lloyd Jones respectively, as part of a competition to design unique glamping spaces themed on Welsh mythology.

A further two, Arthur's Cave and Slate Cabin, are coming to a village near Machynlleth soon.

**Nearest station: Aberystwyth (23 miles). From £289 for three nights. epicretreats.wales**

## WOOD SHACK, BRECON BEACONS

If Thoreau were still around and needed a spot to pen his next *Walden*, it might be the Wood Shack – a tread-lightly, Transcendentalist-ready cabin that brushes up against the Brecon Beacons National Park. In fact, this two-man hideaway in the Welsh woods is actually owned by another writer, Robert Penn, who built it and wrote *The Man Who Made Things out of Trees* here. Inside, there's everything you need for a light-touch, low-carbon holiday, including a log-burner, compost loo, stacks of books and a deck strung with a hammock for swinging to the birdsong.

Across the lane, there's a hiking trail up Sugar Loaf Mountain and local bike-hire companies who'll deliver wheels straight to your door. Crucially, there are also pubs within walking distance, including the Michelin-pipped Walnut Tree, manned by ex-Gidleigh Park chef Shaun Hill.

**Nearest station: Abergavenny (three miles). From £470 for a week. sugarandloaf.com**

## BROCKLOCH, DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

Lovers of wild and lonely places will already know about the Mountain Bothies Association – where you can sleep in simple shelters for free in Scotland, England and Wales.

There's a deck with a hammock for swinging to the birdsong

tal concerns are at this six-acre small-holding in the Mourne mountains. He and wife Claire have been living sustainably on the farm for seven years. It's now organic and off-grid, with the family producing all electricity, harvesting rainwater, growing timber fuel and planting trees to help offset the travel footprint of guests. Your bed is either in the Birch Eco Cottage or the upcycled Off-Grid Horse Truck – both with wood-burning stoves and views of the mountains. Farm produce is readily available and there are hens to lay eggs. But should you need to nip out, there are walks on the doorstep, including a five-mile pub ramble. Steve also teaches sustainability skills in the farm's classroom.

## LACKAN COTTAGE FARM, CO DOWN

Owner Steve Golemboski-Byrne was off teaching permaculture (the art of living lightly on the planet) when we got in touch – which gives you some sense of how ingrained environmen-



From Walden-esque cabins in the woods to off-grid treehouses near Tintagel, **Laura Holt** zeroes in on local, low-carbon holidays

## KUDHVA, CORNWALL

Louise Middleton bought a slate quarry on the north Cornish coast with a vision of amplifying the site's elemental qualities. She has a background in sustainable land management and her partner is an ecologist; the pair teamed up with architect Ben Huggins and boat builder Toby Sharp to craft a series of off-grid "kudhvas" – the Cornish term for hideouts.

The result is four Scandi-style treehouses, covered in lark skin and insulated with birch ply, where guests get far-reaching views of the coast and Tintagel – mythical birthplace of King Arthur. There's a fire-pit outside and mezzanine-style sleeping area up top, but aside from that, candlelight and torches are your only companions – apart from the off-grid bar, perhaps.

Elsewhere, there's an architecturally arresting Danish cabin in the woods that sleeps four. When you're not out walking, surfing, wild swimming and stargazing, recent events have included talks with *Killing Eve* actor Edward Bluemel and "Sunday services" with DJs and cocktails



But increasingly, these naturally off-grid outhouses are being upgraded for other uses, including the Bothy Project. This involves a duo of striking cabins – one on the Isle of Egg, the other in the Cairngorms – available for artists wanting to carry out charity-funded residencies.

However, if you happen to work in accounts and not the arts, you can pay instead to stay at Brockloch in the Galloway hills, which offers a treehouse and a contemporary bothy – both off-grid and enveloped by a 190-acre estate, roamed by red squirrels and roving kites. No TV, no WiFi, just a giant sky-light for spying nature's nighttime canvas.

**Nearest station: Dumfries (12 miles). From £300 for two nights. brockloch.co.uk. For more on bothies, see mountainbothies.org.uk and thebothyproject.org/bothies.**

**Clockwise from main: Wood Shack in Brecon Beacons; Birch Cottage on Lackan Cottage Farm; Kudhva in Cornwall; and Epic Retreats, Ceredigion, Wales**



## TRANSPORT

# The green way to go on holiday

Staycations are best, but if you want to go abroad try the train, says **Seth Wynes**

## Take a staycation

The lowest-carbon way to go on holiday is to keep it local. You can be an eco-saint once you arrive at your destination – reuse your hotel towels, eat local cuisine, nurse an injured bonobo back to health – but if you traversed an ocean for ten days of fun in the sun, all of this will be eclipsed by your travel there. Staycations also mean you can skip the hassle of booking flights, getting travel insurance and exchanging currency.

## Go by rail

On high-speed rail, it's possible to arrive at your destination faster than if you took a plane. Other perks include: no queue for security; you get to stretch your legs on the walk to the dining car; you can enjoy watching the scenery change around you.

When you fly the travel is something to get over as quickly as possible. But when you travel by train the journey can be part of the holiday.



Staying in the UK is far less hassle

## Cruises aren't green

The average emissions of a cruise ship passenger range from 1.56 tCO<sub>2</sub> per trip, up to 6.3 tCO<sub>2</sub> for Antarctic cruises – when the emissions for a single trip are larger than what the average person produces in a year.

## Cut down on flights

Flying less is a hard thing to swallow in our culture, as it's linked with status. If your company pays for you

to go to conferences abroad, this is a sign of success.

Air travel has accomplished great things in our world, but it's time we started viewing it as a precious and limited resource. While aviation is responsible for a relatively small fraction of global emissions at the moment, the number of flyers around the world is rapidly increasing, and by 2050 this sector could take up 22 per cent of global carbon dioxide emissions. You can be a part of change not just by avoiding air travel yourself, but by helping to change the culture.

## Myth: The plane will still leave without me

This type of thinking applies to a lot of environmental actions. Companies plan how much of a product to offer by using sales as a feedback mechanism. So every time you buy a plane ticket you are sending a "market signal" – instructions that you want more flights to take off and more runways to be constructed.

While this flight will still take off without you, the next one may not. And preliminary evidence suggests that people are more likely to reduce their flying if they know someone else who has cut back for climate reasons – so there is value in leadership.



This is an edited excerpt from 'SOS: What you can do to reduce climate change' by Seth Wynes (£7.99, Ebury), out now

## Food

**Bristol's cream**  
Peter Sanchez-Inglesias went from local trattoria to talk of the town  
▶ Page 33



## Arts

**London calling**  
An offbeat guide to the capital's cultural scene by 1's visual arts critic  
▶ Page 34



## Reviews

**Music**  
Tyler, the Creator is back in the UK after four years for a run of sell-out gigs  
▶ Page 36



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