

TRAVEL

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Relax and lay low in a silo

It might go against the grain but now you can go glamping in luxury converted farm silos.

The interconnected former wheat stores near Framlingham, Suffolk, feature a vaulted domed sitting area with wood burner and bespoke gallery-style kitchen, a separate domed bedroom with shower room, an external utility room with a washing machine and bike storage, plus a private outdoor area with table, chairs and BBQ.

Sleeps two, short breaks from £432. glampinghideaways.co.uk

BIG DEAL

Thailand from £1,060pp: save up to 27% on a seven night B&B holiday at the four-star Amari hotel in Hua Hin. Jet away from Manchester on selected dates between May 7-31. Heathrow and Glasgow departures also available, book by April 21. awayholidays.co.uk

Going green

PLANET FRIENDLY TRAVEL NEWS
BY NIGEL THOMPSON

All getaways booked with Hotelplan brands such as Inntravel, Inghams, Esprit Ski and Santa's Lapland will now include donations to eco-projects Klimate and Rewilding Britain.

Klimate specialises in carbon removal rather than traditional offsetting, with tree planting schemes to more complex Direct Air Capture projects. Rewilding Britain works with communities and individuals in the UK to help them rewild land and sea.

Hotelplan chief Joe Ponte, said: "Protecting the planet that we and our customers so love exploring is critical, as is taking a forward-thinking approach in our carbon mitigation efforts." hotelplan.co.uk

■ Plug into a cleaner day out with luxury Mediterranean all-inclusive brand Ikos Resorts.

The firm's Local Drive Adventure programme, where guests borrow a car for free from the hotel to explore the local area and get a real insight into the destination, will now offer Tesla electric vehicles.

Bookings can be made at each property's Guest Services or via the Ikos app.

Locations include Halkidiki, Corfu and Andalusia with Majorca added in June. Other sustainable initiatives feature 100% renewable electricity and a commitment to working with local and organic producers. ikosresorts.com



HOT HOTEL

Gallery Hotel Barcelona

BY PAUL McDAID

ON TOP OF THE WORLD
Gallery's roof bar is the perfect place to begin or end an evening

PLAY TO THE GALLERY

VIBE

The Gallery Hotel, the flagship accommodation in the Gallery group, is a four-star boutique in the centre of Barcelona.

The impressive facade gives way to a bright and impressively lit foyer with sleek lines and shades of marbled art deco opulence.

The rooms are impressively appointed with every modern furnishing including a state-of-the-art coffee maker and a high-end music system that I immediately coveted.

Many hotels talk about providing service but the Gallery seems to take this to a different level as it not only wants you to have an enjoyable stay in the hotel, but it wants that enjoyment to extend beyond the front doors.

The owners want guests to feel like locals and experience the sights and sounds of this extraordinary city in the way a Catalan might.

FOOD AND DRINK

If your chef has previously worked in what some critics called the world's best restaurant, you know you're about to eat well.

And the time Pablo Tomas spent splitting culinary atoms at El Bulli to create exceptionally creative and innovative dishes at the Gallery's in house restaurant Sintonia, is the reason why so many people make repeat bookings.

Tableside cookery is a speciality and the steak tartar, the house's star dish, prepared on the spot is as much to do with theatre as it has gastronomy.

Pablo's top dishes

include the XL cannelloni of "rostit" with foie gras sauce and seasonal mushrooms, the renowned Sintonia steak tartar and the smoked croissant.

Roberto, our Roman head waiter explained each dish with authority but was never stuffy. His knowledge of the hotel's cellar was exemplary and his choices of wine for each dish was an education in itself.

It's little wonder why Sintonia is so popular and will always require a reservation for non-residents.

Of course, for guests, the doors of this first-class eatery are always open.

OUT AND ABOUT

The Gallery is located in the heart of the Barcelona, next to Paseo de Gracia, a three-minute walk from La Pedrera and Gaudi's Casa Batlló and just a few metres from the most exclusive shops on Paseo de Gracia.

Its prime location allows you to discover Barcelona on foot and allows

you to connect with real local life.

On Paseo de Gracia, the streets may not be pathed with gold but they are lined with art treasures in the tiles

designed by the architect Antoni Gaudi, one of Barcelona's most celebrated sons.

Department stores such as Santa Eulalia, a 180-year-old Spanish institution and Loewe, housed in the architecturally significant Casa Lleó i Morera, are worth a visit if

only to see how the super-rich live.

Ask a reception for details of the excellent walking tours of areas such as El Borne, El Barrio Gotico, Gracia and Barceloneta.

ENTERTAIN ME

At the Moco Museum in the heart of El Borne district, you'll find works by Banksy, KAWS, Basquiat and other modern, contemporary and street

artists. It's the perfect place to end an afternoon of wandering around the city centre.

Right across the narrow street, you'll find El Xampanyet one of Barcelona's classic cafes.

Described as "living heritage" and beloved of locals, it has been serving cava, vermouth and montaditos – bread served with various toppings – since 1929.

This small bodega is renowned for its special drink, the "xampanyet", made from white wine and sparkling water. An absolute must if you're in Barcelona.

Head down to Barceloneta (little Barcelona) and you'll find dozens of bars far away from the tourist trail you'll feel like a local.

One of the most celebrated is Bar Electricat and the speciality of the house is a carafe of vermouth and a seafood platter. You'll be amazed by a what a winning combo this is and b. just how cheap this is.

Whatever it is that floats your boat if you can't find it in Barcelona, it probably doesn't exist. What absolutely does exist is one of the city's best and most welcoming hotels in the Gallery.

LET'S EAT
Gallery's restaurant Sintonia is among best in Barcelona



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Many hotels talk about service but Gallery takes this to a different level

STYLISH
Rooms in Gallery are uniquely designed



BOOK IT

Gallery Hotel Rossello, 249
08008 Barcelona
Spain

Call 00 34 934 159 911. Visit www.galleryhotel.com.

MORE INFO

easyjet operates direct services from Belfast to Barcelona. www.easyjet.com

