



PHOTOGRAPHY IMAGES

## SAMPLE A SLICE OF SOMERSET

Located amid Somerset's lush green rolling hills, and just a 30-minute drive from the historic Jurassic Coast (top right), The Shepherds Hut Retreat offers the ultimate rural, romantic getaway.

**DO** Stargaze in your secluded garden, toasting marshmallows on a fire pit (each hut comes with a wood stack), light up the barbecue or laze in the hammock. In the morning, if you've got wheels, head for the beach: West Bay and Lyme Regis offer fishing trips, dolphin watching and exhilarating boat rides ([westbaycharters.co.uk](http://westbaycharters.co.uk); [lymebayribcharter.co.uk](http://lymebayribcharter.co.uk)). Then take a walk on the South West Coast Path to spot wild ponies, peregrine falcons and sea birds. You could also visit nearby Montacute House, an Elizabethan National Trust beauty (adult entry £11.40; [nationaltrust.org.uk](http://nationaltrust.org.uk)), or get into the swing of Somerset life with free admission to the mills, shop and museum at Perry's Cider in Ilminster ([perryscider.co.uk](http://perryscider.co.uk)).

**EAT** The 17th-century Lord Poulett Arms in Hinton-St-George has a string of awards and is great for cider-battered fish, chips

and peas with a pint of Thatchers, followed by a game of backgammon (mains from £14; [lordpoulettarms.com](http://lordpoulettarms.com)). Half an hour's drive takes you to Hix Oyster & Fish House (mains from £14.50; [hixrestaurants.co.uk](http://hixrestaurants.co.uk)) and the Lyme Regis micro-brewery (entry £3.50; [townmill.org.uk/food-drink](http://townmill.org.uk/food-drink)). For supplies, pick up local produce from The Trading Post, Lopenhead, which grows everything from globe artichokes to chard ([www.tradepost.plus.com](http://www.tradepost.plus.com)). Or head to Bridport to shop from Britain's oldest family butcher, RJ Balson ([rjbalson.co.uk](http://rjbalson.co.uk)), and the thriving market (Wednesdays and Saturdays; [bridportandwestbay.co.uk](http://bridportandwestbay.co.uk)).

**STAY** Stylish and intuitively designed, each of the four wood-panelled huts has been handcrafted as a labour of love by owner Andrew and his brother Paul. Freshly painted in muted tones, the huts

are kitted out with a woodburner, kitchenette with full appliances, a Belling cooker, utensils, a butler sink and smart, compact bathroom with a powerful shower. A stack of books and DVDs, binoculars for birdwatchers, Kilner jars stuffed with squashy, fat marshmallows and Classic FM playing softly when you arrive are great touches. There's plenty of storage under the super-cosy double beds, and patio doors open onto peaceful gardens graced with lake views and willow trees – so you wake up to birds chirruping and breakfast alfresco, with ducks and moorhens bobbing on the water. (Two nights' hire, Friday and Saturday, from £198 per hut; [theshepherdshutretreat.co.uk](http://theshepherdshutretreat.co.uk).)

**TRAVEL** The A30 and A303 are within five minutes, and Crewkerne train station, which links to London, is close by.