

FREE  
JULY 2018

# insideKENT

KENT'S PREMIER LUXURY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

8.0000000000000000

CHIDDINGSTONE  
CASTLE

ESTABLISHED 1888

**SUMMER  
FASHION**

**SPOTLIGHT  
ON ORPINGTON**

**THE ULTIMATE  
SUMMER GARDEN PARTY**

## MAKE THE MOST OF THE SUNSHINE

ENJOY EACH AND EVERY MOMENT OF SUMMER AT SOME OF KENT'S BEST BEACHES, PARKS, OUTDOOR ATTRACTIONS AND RESTAURANTS WITH A VIEW

SPECIAL FEATURE: VISIT KENT // SUMMER READING // REVIEW: HOODEN SMOKEHOUSE // JULY EVENTS

## Country house hospitality and total escapism at HARTWELL HOUSE

THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT THE ENGLISH DO WELL... A GOOD CUP OF TEA, THE ABILITY TO FORM ORDERLY QUEUES FOR JUST ABOUT ANYTHING, AND BEAUTIFUL HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE – IN THE CASE OF THE LATTER AT VERY LEAST, HARTWELL HOUSE IS A BREATHTAKING EXAMPLE. **BY SAMANTHA READY**



Navigating through the hit-and-miss traffic of Aylesbury was an interesting start to our arrival at this National Trust-owned, Grade I listed Jacobean and Georgian house, but from the moment we turned into the long winding driveway that ultimately leads to a stunning facade complete with perfectly turned turning circle and grand statue, you were immediately transported away from the hustle and bustle of modern life and into the calm serenity of this stately home and its immaculate landscaped gardens.

All around there are needs to its historic past, the tree-lined avenue that would have been the original entranceway for horse and carts, the wooden banisters with intricate hand-carved faces and the frankly stunning ceiling and fireplaces of the drawing room, hand painted and moulded to represent the elements and the seasons, and where many a guest spends their afternoon tea or pre-supper cocktail (as we did while enjoying canapes of rare venison on crisp bread) gazing skyward, lost in its awe. If you are able to divert your eye away, you may just catch the photo of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother at Hartwell House and truly understand the draw of this beautiful abode.

Having been gawking and sympathetically restored by Historic House Hotels, there are now 48 bedrooms for guests – the most recent additions being the bedrooms and suites in Hartwell Court, a renowned 18th century stables, coach house and indoor riding school – as well as the classic rooms, Royal rooms and Royal suites of the main house.

It was our very own Royal room, superbly situated at the top of the intricately carved staircase of the main house with far-reaching views over the grounds, that my guest and I called home for the evening. And, while the antique furniture, queen-size bed and home-made shortbread biscuits were a big pull, the gardens beyond the window were calling.

Provided with a handy map of the grounds (just one example of the laudible services demonstrated throughout our stay), you'll see there are a variety of pathways and walks to be followed allowing guests to gently stroll, or go full-on explore mode around the grounds and beyond to the Chilterns. We were able to catch the afternoon sun and work our way around the entire perimeter of the house uncovering flower gardens, hidden statues

and the lake before bypassing the main house and heading to the spa block for a quick swim and sauna before dinner.

As if the house itself wasn't enough, the thoroughly deserved 2 AA Rosette Restaurant at Hartwell would be worth the visit alone. With its semi-domed ceilings, columns and tall arched windows, the dining room itself is as beautiful as the dishes it presents. The Bill of Fare with its one-word French fillings is a very modest way of describing far more complex dishes that are as pleasing on the eye as they are on the palate.

My guest's 'brûlée' actually presented a delicate cannelloni filled with chicken, a crispy quail's egg, gyoites and a light mushroom consommé, while his main of 'cod' offered a delicate, butter-poached fillet with a semi-sweet golden raisin puree, violet anchovies and apricots, with texture in the form of homemade crisps and all cut through beautifully with a caper and lemon vinaigrette.

My 'candiflower' appeared as a steaming bowl of hearty soup with added warmth from delicate curry spices offset with sweet and



sharp flavours of apple. The 'steak' that followed delivered a perfectly seared beef fillet with red wine sauce, tomato, mushroom and seasonal vegetables and, my favourite accompaniment, homemade chips, that seemed to disappear across the table.

Using the trustable chip theft as my justification for pudding, we, after much deliberation, opted for the chocolate delight with sautéed caramel, apricot gel and pistachio ice cream and the chocolate fondant – aside from the prerequisite gooey middle, the

caramelised bananas, banana ice cream and hazelnut brittle was a great touch.

Taking after dinner coffee and petit fours in front of the fire in the library was a perfect end to the evening.

Walking to the stin rising across the gardens, we were grateful for our decision to have breakfast delivered to our room as we devoured fresh warm croissants and tea making the most of our last moments as residents of this grand and welcoming home.



Hartwell House & Spa  
Oxford Road,  
Vale of Aylesbury  
Buckinghamshire  
HP17 9NR  
info@hartwell-house.com  
01296 747444  
[www.hartwell-house.com](http://www.hartwell-house.com)

[Twitter](#) @hartwellhouse

[Facebook](#) /hartwellhouse

[Instagram](#) @hartwellhouse

### A NEW FESTIVAL DAY

Mt Ephraim  
Gardens  
Faversham, Kent  
AUGUST 3-5

Three days of classic, legendary  
bands, good food, award winning  
real ales, ciders and lagers,  
presented in a truly beautiful setting

**FEEDER • HAWKWIND • TEN YEARS AFTER • CARAVAN • CURVED AIR**  
**JETHRO TULL'S MARTIN BARRE • CARL PALMER'S ELP LEGACY • GONG**  
**ATOMIC ROOSTER • CRAZY WORLD OF ARTHUR BROWN • HUGH CORNWELL**  
**TYGERS OF PAN TANG • PEATBOG FAERIES • JOHN OTWAY • BERNIE TORMÉ • RUTS DC**  
**Ken Pustelnik's GROUNDHOGS • SON OF MAN • JOHN COGLAN'S QUO • THUNDERSTICK • AVA**  
**Dr SCHWAMP • BEMIS • VIKKI CLAYTON • KANDA BONGO MAN • RODNEY BRANIGAN • THE GIFT**  
**MENTULLS • THE FAR MEADOW • BLACKBEARD'S TEA PARTY • TOMMY JUSTICE • GERRY COLVIN**

Camping & Glamping available. Free parking  
Day tickets from £39. Weekend £110. Details & tickets at:

[www.anewdayfestival.com](http://www.anewdayfestival.com)