

# Condé Nast Traveller

DECEMBER 2015 £4.10

**EPIC AUSTRALIA**

AN EXTRAORDINARY  
OUTBACK ADVENTURE

*Miami*

RETURN OF A CLASSIC

**FLORENCE**

FRESH FINDS IN  
A HISTORIC CITY

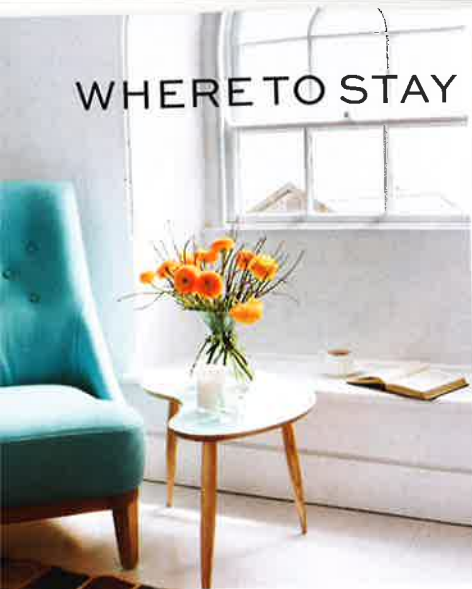
+ THE MOST STYLISH  
SKI HOTELS FOR UNDER £150

THE BEST OF THAILAND  
ISLANDS - BEACHES - RETREATS

*The Heat Is On*



## WHERE TO STAY



spaces. And each has an iPad preloaded with local recommendations.

**EAT** It's basically a B&B, but Stuart holds kitchen suppers on Friday and Saturday nights when she cooks for guests (and anyone else who cares to book) in the basement kitchen/dining room. Breakfast is a feast of thin-sliced fruit and juices (the celery, apple and purple carrot may look like green sludge but is absolutely delicious); the bacon, eggs and sausages for the Full English are all farm-fresh and locally sourced. Supper was fantastic too: plaice ceviche, followed by John Dory fillet with a tomato and cardamom compote, a heavenly summer pudding and Cornish cheeses. There's a decent wine list, and a superb selection of single-malt whiskies should you be so inclined.

**WHO COMES HERE** On this occasion: a couple of French-Canadians travelling around Cornwall on public transport; the CEO of a national transport company and his grown-up family; and a loved-up young couple on a weekend break.

**WE LIKE** Stuart's personal art collection, and the fact that students from the nearby Newlyn School of Art show work in the entrance hall (it's all for sale).

**WE DON'T LIKE** There's no parking. +44 7810 020617; [www.chapelhouse.co.uk](http://www.chapelhouse.co.uk). Doubles from £150 PAULA ELLIS

## THE WEEKENDER

### CHAPEL HOUSE PENZANCE, CORNWALL

**WHY STAY?** It's the smartest, most elegant place in Penzance, a town once considered St Ives' scruffy neighbour but fast coming into its own.

**WHY NOW?** For off-season blustery walks along the coast.

**WHAT IS IT?** A significant red-brick-and-stone Georgian house at the bottom of Chapel Street, close to the harbour wall. Listen to the sound of seagulls; suck up that sea-salty air. Built in the 1790s, it was once home to the Carne family of Cornish bankers (check out the old safe in Room 2). Until 2011 it served as the Penzance Arts Club with just five basic bedrooms and shared loos.

**BEHIND THE SCENES** Susan Stuart, a former charity chief executive, adopted the house as a project after spotting it for sale while on holiday here. It was in a grim state, with plastic shower cubicles

and blocked-up windows, but Stuart took it all on board. The result is pleasingly pared back: white-on-white with painted floorboards and shutters, and delightful original details such as a delicate, hand-carved flower motif on the marble fireplace in one of the two majestically proportioned reception rooms. Polished mahogany antiques, a baby grand, contemporary sofas and warm, abstract-design rugs transform these imposing, high-ceilinged spaces into cosy hangouts.

**SLEEP** There are six bedrooms upstairs. The three on the first floor are more traditional; those on the top-floor are more modern with a glass-and-steel dormer window through which to watch the clouds. All have bespoke oak beds – Stuart is a great champion of Cornish craftsmen and companies – and bathrooms tailored to the different



## OUT AND ABOUT

The lovely **Penlee House Gallery & Museum** has a great collection of Cornish art, and there are terrific contemporary shows at **The Exchange**. For natural beauty products, head to **Pure Nuff Stuff. No.56** sells gorgeous, Scandi-inspired objects (I bought a wooden-acorn light pull); **Kitt's Corner**, above, is rammed with mid-century-modern furniture and lighting. To blow away the cobwebs, walk along the seafront to the fishing village of **Newlyn**.