

WINNER – LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR

Condé Nast Traveler

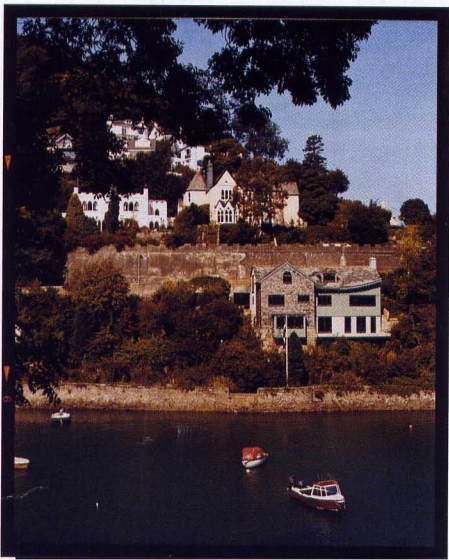
TASTE OF SUMMER
11-PAGE GOURMET GUIDE
TO DEVON



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DEVON IS HEAVEN The county's attractions include sailing around the Dart estuary, *below and bottom right*, surfing on the north coast, *middle*, and eating out at hot spots such as The Quay Restaurant in Ilfracombe, *middle right*, owned by Damien Hirst. *Opposite*, Gidleigh Park



IN 1998, OLGA POLIZZI opened Hotel Tresanton in Cornwall and started a revolution in English hostelry, showing that the provinces could deliver chintz-free style while removing the stuffiness and small-town snobbery that afflicts so many upmarket establishments up and down the country. Now Polizzi has put her money on the neighbouring county with the opening of **Hotel Endsleigh**, which looks set to do for Devon what Tresanton did for Cornwall.

The building is a Grade I-listed *cottage orné* designed in the mid-19th century by Sir Jeffrey Wyatville, with a higgledy-piggledy roofline and a converted coach house and stables set into the Dartmoor hills. The gardens, landscaped by Humphry Repton, include a rich and colourful arboretum, overgrown grottoes and rose-wrapped terraces with lawns that sweep down towards the rum-brown River Tamar. It feels completely enclosed by Dartmoor's lonely beauty, as if there is

no other house for miles (Endsleigh has 200 acres of gardens and parkland). The bedrooms are heavenly, with original scenic wallpapers, antique bathroom fittings, soft sea-grass matting, and chairs upholstered in delicate florals.

I visited as the 24-room property neared completion. It opens in August and, under the direction of Olga's daughter, Alex, and with the help of experienced staff from Tresanton, the hotel is likely to find its feet quickly. It certainly raises the game for Devon – which, right now, is on the up, with more new hotels and restaurants than you might imagine as you sit behind queues of caravans heading for a bleak and beastly Bodmin Moor. For Devon is no longer the gateway to Cornwall: it's a place to stop, and stay.

DEVON IS SOUTHERN ENGLAND's largest county, covering 2,595 square miles. Think of it in two halves, with two moors: Dartmoor, south of the A30 (the route to Cornwall), and Exmoor to the north,