



The best... guest house in the world

**BRITAIN'S COUNTRY-HOUSE
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PHILIPPE STARCK. Apart from a few well-known exceptions, they seem not to have noticed that their guests no longer arrive in a Jaguar XJS or a blazer.

The key element that has dated however, is the attitude, not the look. The answer is not to force some metropolitan aesthetic onto rural outposts, but to update the mood and style of hospitality on offer. For the past few years there has been no better example than Olga Polizzi's sublime Hotel Tresanton on the south Cornish coast; this month's opening of Endsleigh House, in Devon,

is attracting feverish interest because it is Tresanton's first sister property.

Built in 1812 and set in 108 acres of woodland on the edge of Dartmoor, both Endsleigh House and its gardens, which bear comparisons with Kew, are Grade-I listed. Its proximity to the River Tamar, famed for its trout fishing, led Alex Polizzi – hotel manager and Olga's daughter – to buy seven rods from the Endsleigh Fishing Club, so that guests can idle a day away on the river bank. She says her aim is for "guests to feel as if they're staying with people they don't know all that well, but who live in a glamorous house".

Modern interiors would be no match for the house's strong Gothic

architecture, so Olga has filled it with a sympathetic collection of antiques. The 15 guest rooms are decorated in traditional Regency colours such as duck-egg blue, while the deeply comfortable furniture is upholstered in modern floral prints that happily bear little resemblance to the work of Laura Ashley. This is English country style re-imagined. If interiors without Eames-designed furniture make you uneasy then Endsleigh House may not be the place for you, but if you want to live like 21st-century landed gentry for a day or two, it may just be heaven on earth. ③

Doubles from £210. Endsleigh House, Milton Abbot, Devon (01822 870 248)



House of the rising sum: the Polizzis bought Endsleigh House last September and have overhauled it completely. Re-plumbing alone cost £500,000