

Hot stuff 2005

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...AND THE UK?

What's hot? Devon. It's not nearly as crowded as Cornwall, it's not quite so far away from everywhere and it is finally getting a trendy bolt hole. The queen of the country-house weekend, the designer and hotelier Olga Polizzi, will open Hotel Endsleigh in a sleepy Devon village in May.

Why is it hot? Hotel Endsleigh (01822 870248) is a Grade I-listed 19th-century hunting lodge in Milton Abbot, near Tavistock. Once Polizzi has waved her magic wand, it is likely to be every bit as sought-after as her Hotel Tresanton. Yet, while Tresanton is atmospheric, it is stuck in the middle of St Mawes, so has its bucolic limitations. Endsleigh, on the other hand, has 108 acres of estate with a river running through it, a shell grotto and an impressive arboretum. That's before you even cross the threshold and encounter the house's eccentricities: among them a veranda made from sheep's knuckles and roof supports created from tree trunks. It is bound to be an out-and-out winner.

If you can't wait until then for some bracing country air, Four Seasons opens its Country Retreat (01252 853000, www.fourseasons.com; doubles from £255) in Dogmersfield Park, Hampshire, next month. It will be a much more formal, gold-tapped number than Endsleigh, but doubtless impressive all the same.