



Lasting memories in long cherished Bodysgallen

The Grade 1 listed Bodysgallen Hall is a country house located near to the North Wales seaside resort of Llandudno.

Dating back to 1620, the tower at Bodysgallen was built as a watchtower for the low-lying Conwy castle

Today, Bodysgallen Hall sits in splendid formal gardens and among some 200 acres of parkland.

It still offers fine views of the Castle and Snowdonia beyond.

The Hall has a 3 AA Rosette restaurant and spa with its 50ft swimming pool, treatment rooms, steam room and sauna.

Accommodation comes in the main house itself or in converted cottage suites.

Bodysgallen Hall is a member of the Historic House Hotels group, along with Hartwell House, in Buckinghamshire and Middlethorpe Hall, in York.

www.bodysgallen.com

Ashley Gibbins
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AllWays traveller





When going the extra mile brings great reward

While it's a fair drive from London to Llandudno, making the trip to Bodysgallen Hall was never going to be that much of a gamble.

By Ashley Gibbins

We had already greatly enjoyed excellent stays at the other two properties in the Historic House Hotels portfolio, so were confident our stay at Bodysgallen Hall would not disappointment.

Far from it.

Our two nights in and around this hotel was hugely memorable.

The anticipation of what's in store starts the moment one drives the quarter of a mile to the Hall through grassy parkland scattered with grand old oaks.

Pulling up to the lower- level car park, one looks up to an old manor house as so many people had done over the centuries.

As with all guests, we were greeted by hotel staff ready to assist with taking our bags up the short flight of stone steps to the house.

Through the old oak entrance door and one is in an entrance hall, dating from the early 1600s, and the mood is set (as Ann will explain).

By Elizabethan times, Bodysgallen was in the ownership of a Richard Mostyn, a High Sheriff of Caernarvonshire.

When Mostyn's daughter Margaret married Hugh Wynn of Berthdu, it passed to the Wynn family.

The initials of their son, Robert and those of his wife Katherine, dated 1620, can be found on the south-west gable.

At this time the Hall comprised five storeys, including attics and cellar, a large low hall entered at terrace level and an equally large chamber above, which became the drawing room.

Bodysgallen today

Both are now able to be admired and enjoyed by guests to admire and enjoy

One can happily not leave Bodysgallen Hall during a short break and we did spend much time relaxing in the oh so comfortable reception rooms choc full of character.

Or strolling the splendid gardens.

But we did manage to tear ourselves away from the Hall to get to Conwy and Llandudno and take in a tour through the Snowdonia National Park.

Sometimes a short break is long enough. Other times it is far too short.

A stay at Bodysgallen Hall is most definitely the latter.



Conwy



Llandudno



Snowdonia



As fine a hotel as one could wish for

Dating back to the 17th century and overlooking the wild Welsh mountains of Snowdonia, Bodysgallen Hall could have come straight out of a romantic Gothic novel - beautiful, brooding, majestic with many a secret to hide and story to tell.

By Ann Mealor

I half expected to see a dark, moodily handsome, wavy-haired Mr Rochester, or Poldark type stride out to greet me, dogs gambling at heel, white cotton shirt blowing in the wind and black stallion stamping impatiently in the stable.

It wasn't to be, but still, we had a very courteous welcome from a very smartly dressed member of the reception team who came to the car to help us in with our luggage.

Inside, Bodysgallen Hall is just as you would imagine.

There are lots of oak panelling, grand fireplaces, wood carvings, stone mullioned stained glass windows, antique furnishings, comfortable sofas, soft cushions, rich fabrics, creaking floorboards, interesting curios and a sweeping staircase.

The large entrance hall is impressive with its roaring fire and cosy inglenooks.

This country house is full of twists and turns and has plenty of places in which to hide away and curl up, undisturbed, with a book.

As we made our way to our room, we passed imposing portraits of the all-knowing, ancient ancestors, proudly staring out of their gilt-edged frames as, if to say, we trod your way, many years ago.

The bedroom

Our room was light, airy and elegant with magnificent views over the historic gardens.

Floris toiletries were in the bathroom and a well-stocked hospitality tray on the dressing table.

On our way down to explore our surroundings before dark, we popped into the traditionally stylish Drawing Room on the first floor.

Plush and luxurious, it was the perfect place to enjoy an afternoon coffee or a pre-dinner glass of wine.

The gardens

The gardens are a spectacular feature of Bodysgallen Hall. They stand within 200 acres of parkland are beautifully kept.

As well as a walled rose garden, colourful flowers, and finely cut lawns, there is a 17th century parterre of neatly trimmed box hedges filled with sweet-scented herbs.

There are also a number of woodland trails and walks for guests to explore, all of which offer picturesque views of the house or grounds.



The spa

A short walk from the main house and situated in converted stone farm buildings is the health and fitness spa.

It is open to all guests and offers a range of health and beauty treatments as well as a large swimming pool, a gym, steam room, sauna and relaxation room.

Dining at Bodysgallen

Dining at Bodysgallen Hall feels like a special occasion. The dress code is smart and the setting is refined and genteel: silver cutlery, crisp, white tablecloths, candles and gleaming glassware.

The wine list is extensive, and the dinner menus are constantly evolving to reflect the seasons and availability of local game and produce.

The restaurant has also been awarded 3 AA Rosettes.

After tucking-in to the bread and Welsh butter (a favourite of mine) we started with the white onion velouté which was delicately light and full of flavour.

For mains, I chose the grilled fillet steak which was cooked exactly to my liking.

Ashley went for the local wild sea bass with polenta fritters and charred aubergine – a mouth-watering combination. He enjoyed every mouthful, as did I.

No matter how full we feel, we always like to try a dessert.

This time we chose the Trinity College Cream with poached rhubarb and the Eton Mess with a summer fruit sorbet.

Both were delicious, but I particularly liked the silky College Cream which was perfectly complimented by the tart rhubarb.

We took our coffee and chocolates into the hall and relaxed on a sofa in front of the fire, taking in the history of the place and admiring the various objets d'art that filled the room.

The service was excellent – knowledgeable, friendly and discreet.

We sent our compliments to Head Chef, Abdalla El Shershaby and his team.

Breakfast at the Hall

Breakfast was also a tasty affair. There was a buffet of fruit, including whole poached pears, juices, pastries and cereal, as well as a range of hot dishes on the menu.

Ashley particularly enjoyed the poached egg and haddock and I the full traditional breakfast.

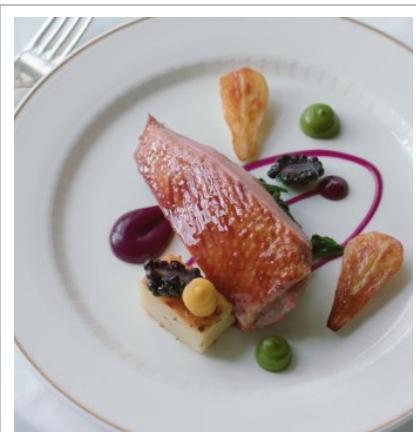
The poached eggs were wonderful and perfectly done, golden yolk flowing out from the first cut of the knife.

The loose-leaf earl grey tea was particularly good and kept piping hot in the stainless-steel teapot.

Afternoon tea

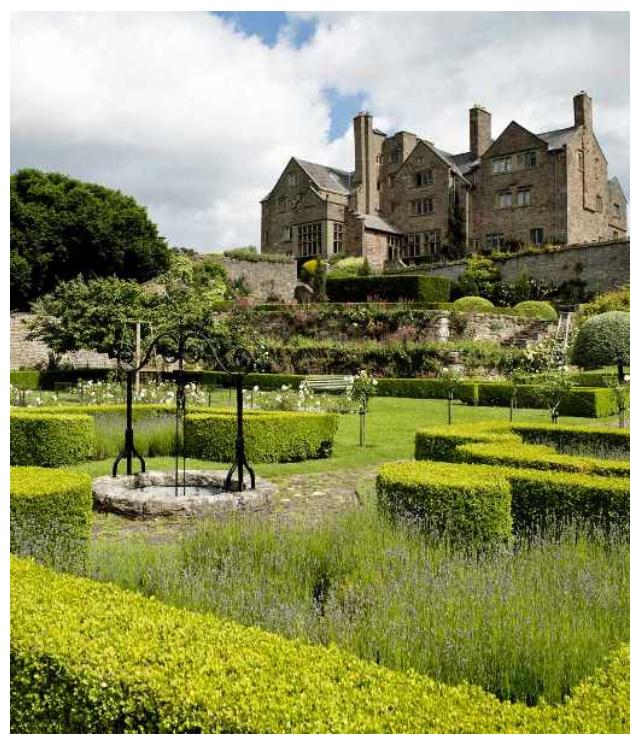
Before we left Bodysgallen we sampled the Afternoon Tea – a delightful selection of finger sandwiches, freshly baked scones with clotted cream and strawberry jam, cakes and pastries.

Sat in front of the fire sipping Lapsang Souchong tea it was a very pleasant affair and a suitable end to our stay at this magnificent country house hotel.



More information

www.bodysgallen.com



The gardens at Bodygallen delight year round

One of the genuine pleasures of a visit to Bodygallen Hall is being able to enjoy its grounds and gardens, at any time of the year.

These also provide a wonderful backdrop during breakfast or dinner in the Hall's restaurant.

Over 200 acres of formal gardens and parkland surround the hall.

The gardens are particularly impressive particularly the classical garden created with, statues, obelisks and canals and this legacy can be enjoyed today.

These feature a rare 17th century parterre of box hedges filled with herbs, with a sundial dated 1678 as the focal point

There is also a formal walled rose garden and a potager garden, which produces much of the organic fruit, vegetables and herbs used in Chef's seasonal menus.

Beyond are a choice of woodland walks including one that leads to a gothic tower and another to the obelisk on top of Pydew mountain.

These offer great views across to the River Conwy to the Castle and medieval town,

Guided garden tours by the head gardener are available on request.



Conway

Conwy, Llandudno and the Snowdonia National Park

Conwy, what was known in English as Conway, is a Medieval market town on the north coast of Wales.

Sitting at the foot of the mountains of Snowdonia, the Conwy most visitors will focus on is dominated by its castle and town within its old city walls.

Conwy Castle

Conwy Castle and the walled town was built by Edward I between 1283 and 1289, as of the king's conquest of Wales.

Costing around £15,000, a staggering amount at the time, the king visited there just the once, in 1294, when he was trapped in the castle by a Welsh rebellion and where he spent a miserable Christmas, with just one barrel of wine for comfort.

The castle today gives a genuine insight into the life and times of the castle during its heyday, nearly 750 years ago.

Beyond the ramparts, one can walk the city walls to view the historic town below.

Back at ground level, this bustling small town offers a range of small independent shops mixing with pubs, cafes and restaurants.

The quay side is always a hive of activity.

Llandudno and the Great Orme



Llandudno, which adjoins Conwy, is Wales's largest resort and has retained the atmosphere of its Victorian and Edwardian heritage.

It has a broad promenade and the requisite seaside pier.

Towering over Llandudno is the Great Orme, a 'mini-mountain', with the chance to get to the top via the historic Great Orme Tramway which is the UK's longest cable car and has been taking passengers to the summit since 1898.

There is also the chance to weave by car to the top with stops, and a café, along the way



VisitBritain and Lee Beel

More information

www.conwy.com

www.cadw.gov.wales/more-about-conwy-castle

www.visitwales.com/destinations/north-wales/llandudno-colwyn-bay

www.visitllandudno.org.uk/great-orme-country-park



Snowdonia National Park



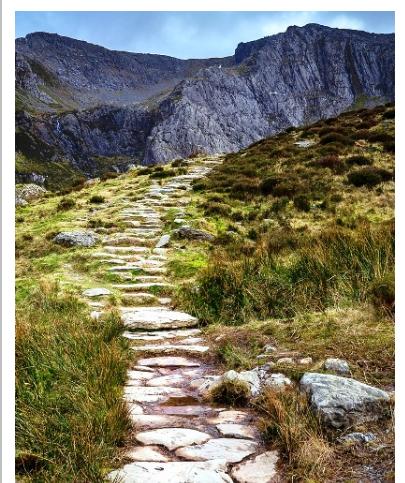
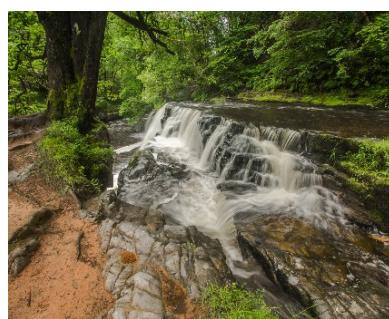
Bodsgallen provides a fine base for exploring the Snowdonia National Park. The park embraces the highest mountain and the largest natural lake in Wales, as well as small villages like Betws y Coed and Beddgelert.

The park's historic Snowdon Mountain Railway climbs to the summit from where there are views across the sea to Ireland.

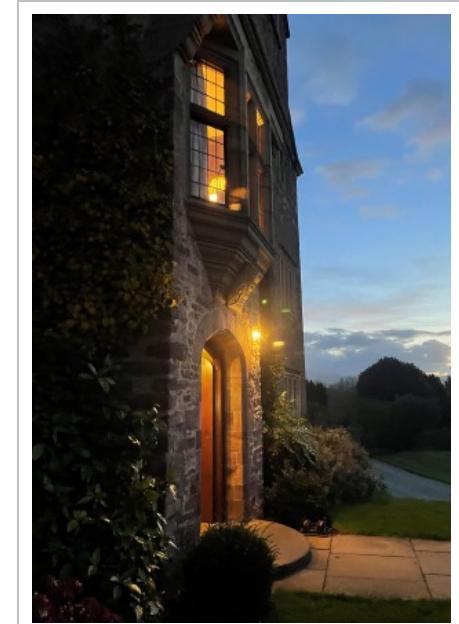
The park is also home to a network of trails, over 100 lakes and craggy peaks such as Cader Idris and Tryfan.

More information

www.snowdonia.gov.wales/home



A snapshot of a stay at Bodysgallen Hall



Historic House Hotels

Historic House Hotels was founded in 1979 to rescue and restore run-down country houses.

Through careful restoration, the houses and gardens have been brought back to life as historically accurate, yet contemporary hotels.

In 2008, the hotels were given to the National Trust to ensure their long-term protection.

Middlethorpe Hall



Middlethorpe Hall is a country house two miles from the centre of historic York.

It was built between 1699 and 1701 for master cutler Thomas Barlow, who bought the Middlethorpe estate to establish himself as a country gentleman.

Guests staying today at the 29 bedroom hotel get a genuine feel of the grand style of living enjoyed by the wealthy in the 18th Century.

The house has been carefully restored to reflect its status in the 1700s and is furnished throughout with antiques and fine paintings.

It sits in 20 acres of walled gardens, landscaped lawns and parkland with a small lake.

Read more :

<https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/europe/enjoy-an-18th-century-lifestyle-for-a-while-1>

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AllWays traveller is the consumer travel magazine from the International Travel Writers, providing independent travellers with views of the world from Alliance travel journalists.

www.allwaystraveller.com



The International Travel Writers Alliance is the world's largest association of professional travel journalists.

www.itwalliance.com

All hotel profits go back into the National Trust's conservation of special places.

In addition to Bodysgallen Hall, the other two properties in the *Historic House Hotels* portfolio are :

Hartwell House



Hartwell House, one of England's finest stately homes, sits in 90 majestic acres of landscaped parkland.

It is located two miles west of Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire and about an hour's drive from central London.

This truly majestic country house has been welcoming guests for centuries, including Louis XVIII, the exiled King of France who set up his Court here, away from the Napoleonic Wars, between 1809 and 1814.

Today, Hartwell House is a hotel offering guests the same high standard of hospitality in a setting that is a world away from the strains and stresses of modern day living.

Read more :

<https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/europe/history-abounds-in-this-very-english-stately-home>



Between 1720's and 1743 an idyllic classical garden was created with, statues, obelisks and canals and this legacy can be enjoyed today.

www.hartwell-house.com



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