



Dormy House

Scandinavian cosy in the Cotswolds

Dormy House Hotel is in a 17th-century farmhouse that has been converted into a luxury rural retreat.

It sits within the 500-acre Farncombe Estate, which is located above the quintessential Cotswold village of Broadway, and near to the equally attractive small town of Chipping Camden.

Owned by the Philip-Sørensen family from Denmark, Dormy House embraces the hygge approach throughout and provides a fine base for exploring in the Cotswolds.

This is a range of 'wolds' or rolling hills, much of it an officially National Landscape for its outstanding natural beauty.

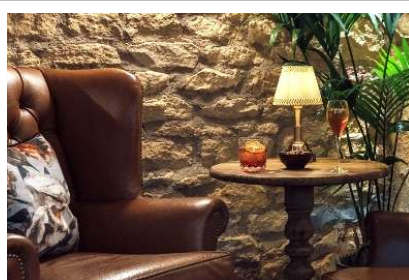
A number of National Trust properties are to be found in the area, including Snowhill Manor and Garden and Charlecote Park, while Stratford-up-Avon is within easy reach.

<https://dormyhouse.co.uk/>

Ashley Gibbins
Commissioning Editor, *AllWays traveller*



Snowhill Manor



Dormy House



Charlecote Park



Making the most of a Cotswolds break

The Cotswolds, like the Lake District, is a region of the UK that draws visitors from far and wide.

By Ashley Gibbins



And no wonder.

A National Landscape (what was previously termed an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it takes in some 800 square miles that are mainly within the English counties of Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, and Wiltshire.

Here you will find quintessential English country villages and historic market towns hewn of distinctive honey-coloured Cotswold stone.

Of these the village of Broadway considers itself the *Jewel of the Cotswolds* with its wide, tree-lined High Street and large village green.

Nearby is Chipping Campden, which is my favourite Cotswold for having all the charm without being twee.

In the High Street here you will find the Market Hall, dating back to 1627 and a time when Chipping Campden was one of the most important of the medieval wool towns in England.

Today, High Street is lined with restaurants and historic inns, a range of independent shops and well-preserved stone houses still pay tribute to its former wealth.

Chipping Campden also provides the start of the 102-mile Cotswold Way National Trail to Bath.

https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/en_GB/trails/cotswold-way/



And a proverbial 'stone's throw' from both Broadway and Chipping Campden is Dormy House, where we were lucky enough to stay on this short trip to the Cotswolds.

National Trust properties near Dormy House



Snowshill Manor

There is much to see and do in the Cotswolds area of outstanding natural beauty, be it strolling or rambling country lanes and moorland, visiting historic rural towns and villages or 'having a pint' in a country pub.

<https://www.cotswolds.com/>

Whatever else we do, however, Ann and I will always look to see what National Trust properties there are in the area.

From our base at Dormy House we were spoilt for choice opting, in the time allowed, to take in Snowshill Manor and Garden and Charlecote Park.

Both were greatly rewarding in their own right.

Snowshill Manor and Garden

Snowshill Manor, in the Gloucestershire village of Snowshill, is the one-time home of very wealthy and truly eccentric Charles Paget Wade (1883-1956).

Wade bought the derelict 16th-century Snowshill Manor in 1919 and, as a trained architect, used his professional skills to restore the Tudor house as a 'home' for his passionate collecting.

During his time here, Wade purchased and displayed over 22,000 objects that had taken his fancy.

These ranged from domestic appliances and commonplace objects; sets of Japanese Samurai armour; ornate masks; paintings and statuettes; musical instruments, old bicycles; children's toys and clocks.

And this list just skims the surface of items Wade amassed and displayed in themed rooms designed to create an 'atmospheric, dramatic and theatrical experience'.

Deeming Snowshill to be a place devoted to his growing collection, Wade opted not to live in the main Manor house itself.

He set up his home and workshop in the adjoining former wash and bake house known as the Priest's House.

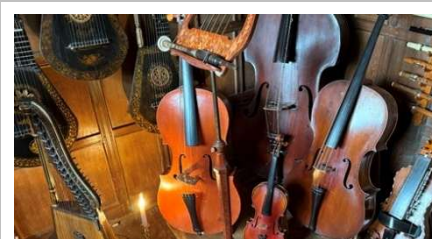
Needless-to-say he managed to fill this with all manner of curios.

While at Snowshill Wade also found time to oversee the design and landscaping of the terraced gardens as outdoor 'rooms'.

Determined his collection survived himself, Charles Wade handed his entire estate and collection to the National Trust in 1951.

Visiting today, one is astounded at the range and diverse depth of Charles Wade's collecting, and the unrelenting passion with which he went about it.

This is so evident when talking to the wonderful volunteers who are found in most of the rooms and who thrive in recounting tales of Wade's approach to collecting and his extraordinary eye for colour, design and workmanship.



More information :

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/snowshill-manor



Charlecote Park

Charlecote is a grand Tudor house surrounded by a deer park and formal gardens on the banks of the Avon between Warwick and Stratford.

Although there have been Lucys living at Charlecote since the 12th century, what we find today is an Elizabethan mansion, built by Sir Thomas Lucy in 1558.

It was then remodelled by George and Mary Elizabeth Lucy, in the 1800s, to create one of the finest examples of the Elizabethan Revival style.

Through the centuries, the Lucy's enjoyed great wealth as country gentry, with income sourced primarily from ownership of large swathes of land and a few fortuitous marriages.

And while Charlecote was given to the National Trust in 1946, in lieu of death duties, members of the Fairfax-Lucy family still live in a part of the house.

To read a fascinating full history of Charlecote :

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/warwickshire/charlecote-park/history-of-charlecote-park>.

The grand house itself sits in 180 acres of landscaped deer park, originally laid out by 'Capability' Brown in the 18th century and with fallow deer and Jacob sheep roaming.

The much-told tale of William Shakespeare having been caught poaching deer in the park and being prosecuted by Sir Thomas Lucy is perhaps a case of 'poetic licence', though Will would undoubtedly have known of Charlecote and would likely have visited.

A tour of the house

Entering the house through the Great Hall one tours the dining room, library, billiards room and drawing room on the ground floor and bedroom above.

The courtyard outside the main house takes in the original laundry room, brewhouse, stables and tack room with a carriage collection and the Victorian kitchen and scullery.

Yet again, quizzing the volunteers on hand will greatly enhance a visit to this magnificent property.



More information :

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/charlecote



Dormy House is a hotel that gives you a big hug

This hotel is as welcoming and homely as it is sumptuous and luxurious.

By Ann Mealor

This former 17th century farmhouse, now refurbished to the highest standards, is set within the 500-acre Farncombe estate, above the Cotswold village of Broadway.

Dormy House was bought, in 1977 by the late Danish entrepreneur Jørgen Philip-Sørensen, of Ecover green cleaning brand fame, and still remains in the family.

The ethos is to think local, not only for top quality meat, fish and produce for the restaurants but also when recruiting new team members.

Staff are hired locally for their 'can-do' attitude, warmth of spirit and open minds.

Not surprising, given its Danish pedigree, Dormy House is fully committed to sustainability and looking after the environment and its beautiful surroundings.

Rainwater is collected and used in showers and toilets; water is heated by solar power; trees have been planted to offset carbon emissions, and a woodland management scheme protects the countryside and its wildlife.



A hotel that hugs you

When Jorgen Philip-Sorensen bought the property, he wanted to create 'a hotel that hugs you', and that is Dormy House.

As soon as you walk through the front door, you feel right at home.

No formal reception desk

A log fire burns in the stone fireplace and the warmly lit lounge is filled with comfy sofas, leather chairs and plump cushions.

You are greeted personally, in our case by Amy, who took all our details and checked us into our room in a very friendly and professional manner.



Our room

Our room was airy, stylish and decorated in soothing natural tones and with all the expected mod cons.

Everything we needed for a very comfortable stay, including a powerful walk-in shower; soft, fluffy bath robes and slippers; naturally fragrant Temple Spa toiletries; cartons of water and a hospitality tray generously filled with a selection of Hoogly teabags, plastic free coffee capsules and bars of artisan chocolate.

Our room

Before dinner we took the opportunity to explore the many cosy sitting areas and small lounges that makes Dormy House so snug and intimate.



Original, rustic features such as flagstone flooring, oak beams and open brickwork are paired with chic Scandi style furnishings, painted panelling.

There is subtle lighting everywhere, log filled wood burners, green foliage, leather couches and soft fabrics.

Interesting, carefully placed *objet d'art* fill the shelf spaces, nooks and crannies.

Everything fits so well together.

The estate

We also managed to take a walk around the estate, which was a great way to build up an appetite, get some fresh air and take in the picturesque scenery.

Wellington boots can be borrowed if needed, so you can go for a hike no matter how muddy!

Dogs are also welcome to join you.

Dining at Dormy

Dormy House has two restaurants.

The *Back Garden* which offers seasonal ingredients, rare breed meats and garden grown vegetables and the award-winning *MO*, which offers creative and adventurous eight course tasting menus for small numbers of guests at a time.

We had evening dinner in the glamorous yet relaxed *Back Garden*, which glittered and sparkled as light danced off the crystal wine glasses and silver cutlery.

For starters, I had a generous portion of crispy filo prawns with a seaweed and chilli dip.

Ashley had a creatively presented torched Cornish mackerel with cauliflower in a sherry vinegar and seaweed dressing.

The sourdough from the local bakery and the seaweed butter were top notch.

For the main event I chose the meaty bbq grilled monkfish which was well paired with a tikka masala sauce and spiced cauliflower.

Ashley picked the flavoursome Loch Duart salmon with smoked eel in a creamy chowder.

To accompany our meal, we chose a delicious bottle of English white Bacchus which complemented our food perfectly.

For dessert, I had a mouthwatering sweet treat of a well risen Dormy plum souffle with pistachio and preserved plums.

An unusual, yet winning combination.

Ashley went for the *moorish* sticky toffee Braeburn apple pudding with a decadent boule of clotted cream ice cream – a grand finale to our fine dining experience.

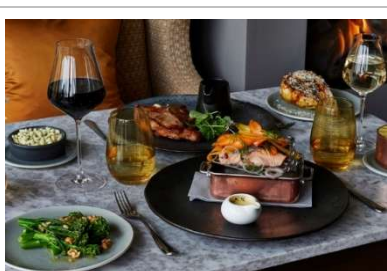
Breakfast

In the morning, we were in the *Back Garden* again for breakfast.

This time, it had a bright and breezy ambience with lovely views over the garden.

We helped ourselves to juices, fruit and cereal and then ordered other, freshly prepared items from the menu.

This included a selection of cheese to share with Brie, Double Gloucester, Emmental and Gruyere along with slices of crusty sourdough.



I also opted for creamy scrambled eggs atop layers of smoked salmon, while Ashley tucked in to a full flavoured kipper topped and softly poached eggs with oozing yolks.

We still managed to find room for a moist and gooey pain aux raisin each.

No lunch was needed!

The service from staff throughout the Dormy Hotel was exemplary.

Everyone was warm, friendly and very helpful – nothing was too much trouble



The spa

The award-winning House Spa is well worth a visit and has been given a 5-bubble rating in the Good Spa Guide 2025.

It offers a range of soothing and rejuvenating skin treatments in tranquil surroundings from skilled therapists.

The Spa includes a 16m infinity pool and a Scandi-style thermal suite with a salt infusion steam room, lavender sauna, juniper Finnish sauna, and a favourite of many, an invigorating Snow Shower.

With all this on offer, Dormy House has everything needed for the perfect rural escape.

More information :

<https://dormyhouse.co.uk/>

The Farncombe Estate



Foxhill Manor



Self-catering

Farncombe offer fine options for your Cotswold base

The 500-acre Farncombe offers three hotels, restaurants, a spa, holiday cottages, outdoor activities and a wellbeing centre.

In addition to Dormy House, which Ann has written about below, is part of the Estate, which is privately owned by the Philip-Sørensen family from Denmark.

Also found here is *The Fish Hotel* along with a range of self-catering cottages and treehouses and Foxhill Manor, a five-star hotel in a Grade II listed manor house.

Activities on the estate range from archery and clay pigeon shooting to axe throwing and tractor driving.

Being Danish, it is no surprise to find the Philip-Sørensen's have infused their properties with Scandinavian *hygge* to create 'coziness and comfortable conviviality with feelings of well-being, contentment, and charming simplicity'.

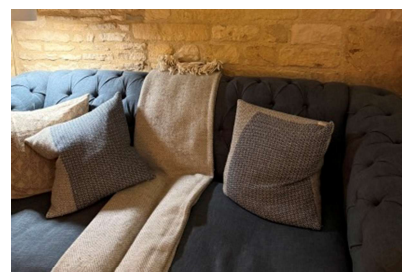
More information :

<https://dormyhouse.co.uk/>; <https://thefishhotel.co.uk/>; <https://foxhillmanor.com/>; and <https://farncombeestate.co.uk/self-catering-accommodation/>

AllWays leading to Dormy House and the Cotswolds



Dormy House and activities on the Farncombe Estate



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www.allwaystraveller.com



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

www.itwalliance.com



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