

TRAVEL

The Headland Hotel

THE COAST WITH THE MOST

SARAH BRAZENDALE DISCOVERS CLIMATE IS RIGHT FOR AUTUMNAL BREAK IN NEWQUAY

WHETHER you're craving an adventure, in desperate need of some chill-time, or simply want a few nights away to catch up with your friends or family away from the dramas of day-to-day life, then Newquay's a great place to visit.

And yes you might be thinking, 'Oh, but that's more of a summer holiday destination', and yes it is, but it's also a brilliant place to visit all year round.

We travelled down at the beginning of autumn and although slightly breezy on the beach, it was lovely. It's climate is quite the opposite of the 'oh so rainy north', and so our autumnal trip down to the south coast felt like a weekend abroad. We chose to stay at the

TRAVEL REPORT NEWQUAY

Headland Hotel, which is - quite literally - on the edge of the sea, just to the side of the famous Fistral Beach.

Approaching the hotel is very picturesque, as the unique red-brick building is a stark contrast to the lapping waves behind.

Entering the hotel you're greeted by what I would call old-fashioned glamour, all the rooms are intricately furnished to the smallest

detail and has all the luxuries that you rarely find nowadays in contemporary hotels, such as a morning room and a very attentive concierge service.

We stood waiting to check-in likening the scene to something out of Grand Budapest Hotel.

Our room was simply beautiful, we had a Fistral View suite, which meant we had the added luxury of a little living room on top of big double bedroom with dressing space and a big bathroom with a his and hers sink.

The windows looked right out on to the beach so you could watch the surfers attempting to ride the waves as you got ready.

As a resident of The Headland you also get complimentary access to the spectacular spa on the bottom floor.

Complete with sauna, steam room and hot tub, it is delightful - and that's just the pool area. The spa features a small cafe, a nail-bar, multiple treatment rooms and a truly tranquil relaxation room to enjoy at your leisure.

treatments including a Rhassoul mud room and an ELEMIS deep-tissue full-body massage, which I gave a go.

The therapist asks what areas you'd like to focus on and asks about your general stress levels to assess any tension you might be carrying.

Then chooses an oil to match your mood, whether relaxation is your aim or something more uplifting. You'll be sure to exit the room, as I did, very relaxed and calm as you're led into the relaxation room to continue the total chill-out experience.

● *Head to headlandhotel.co.uk/spa to discover the wide range of treatments available at the spa.*

WHEN IN NEWQUAY...

Before this trip I'd never set foot on a surfboard, and if you'd believe it, barely stepped foot in the sea - hello, sharks?

But never the less we made our way down (the short few hundred yards) to Newquay Activity Centre and tried our hand at surfing.

We enjoyed a cool two-hour taster lesson as we were both newbies and needed to learn everything from how to lie on the board to how to assess the waves.

The lesson included an introduction to all the main aspects

of surfing; how to assess the ocean before heading out, safety, terminology (I now know what they mean when they fist pump in the air, it's not having a blast, it's danger), handling the board and jumping up if you can grasp it that quickly (I did not).

Before getting in the sea I was visibly nervous, which I'm 100 per cent sure our brilliant instructor, Brendan, noticed immediately.

However, he was extremely patient with me and gave me extra attention all the way through the lesson to make sure I felt as comfortable as possible and pushed me just enough to get me to give surfing my best shot.

By the end of the two hours we were confident looking for a wave to catch and getting on the board, paddling as quickly as our arms could paddle, and attempting to jump up on to our feet to ride the wave to the shore - and I for one came away pretty proud of myself.

We visited at the start of autumn which I originally thought might be a little cold to be wading into the sea but Brendan actually told us it's the best time to swim as the sea has had the whole to summer to heat up so it's actually pretty toasty in your wetsuit.

I have to say Brendan was brilliant and a very experienced surfer - previously teaching all over the world including surfing hotspots, Australia and Bali - and he was a great teacher.

This experience immediately put me at ease before getting into the water.

If any of that sounded a little out of your knowledge (or comfort) zone then I'd definitely recommend it, it's one to tick off the bucket list for sure.

● *Call Newquay Activity Centre on 01637 877722 or head to newquayactivitycentre.co.uk to check it out.*

TOP SPOTS - NEWQUAY

Holidays are usually a time when you can kick back and relax and put the diet aside for a week or two and let yourself indulge.

But in Newquay we found that we didn't really have to do that, the town blends delicious tastes with healthy plates and our visit to Sprout Health definitely confirmed that for us.

The one-dish menu features dishes packed with goodness, such as black bean and butternut squash chilli with gluten-free brown bread.

The cafe serves all vegan food such as gluten-free vegan pasties and a large range of delicious vegan desserts.

All served to takeaway or stay-in, as you are free to sit around a cosy communal dining space.

There you can also pick up a wide range of vegan and gluten-free

foods, such as alternatives to flour, various herbal teas and coffees and gluten-free pasta - who knew?

EATING OUT

■ The Samphire

On our first night we dined at the hotel restaurant, if I can call it that. The Samphire isn't your standard hotel meal as the Headland Hotel boasts a double AA rosette-awarded dining experience.

The kitchen is led by executive chef, Christopher Archambault, and has reportedly been inspired by the dramatic Cornish coastline, located right outside the restaurant's window.

We walked to our table, which was located right on the edge of the room and faced towards the beautiful views of the sea, and so we were able to watch the sun go down as we ate our starters.

We were treated to a truly

NEED TO KNOW

If you're interested in taking a trip to Newquay, head to lovenqy.com.

Sarah stayed at the Headland Hotel which can be found at the Distral Beach Complex, headlandhotel.co.uk.



The Samphire



Late deals / UK

● SYKES Holiday Cottages is offering £107 off a seven-night stay at Sea Ayr, a ground-floor holiday apartment just outside Bude. Just a 15-minutes walk from the beach and within easy reach of the south west coast path, this property is perfect for a family spring break. Bude has something for everyone, great beaches, rockpools for investigating at low tide, and cafes to enjoy the views. Price includes seven nights' self-catering accommodation for four people for £478. Travel dates: March 24-March 31. Offer available for a limited time only, subject to availability.

● To book, visit www.sykescottages.co.uk or phone 01244 617 683.

● MARINA View ref 941000, Whitby, North Yorkshire - now £356, save £79.

Sykes Holiday Cottages is offering £79 off a week's stay at this modern apartment. With beautiful views of the harbour and abbey, Marina View is the ideal base for exploring Whitby. Within a five-minute walk guests can enjoy a variety of pubs and shops and explore the little, narrow streets. They can also visit the harbour for a bite to eat or climb the famous 199 steps leading up to the abbey. Price includes seven nights' self-catering accommodation for two people for £356. Travel dates April 6-April 13. Offer available for a limited time only, subject to availability.

● To book, visit www.sykescottages.co.uk or phone 01244 617 683.

● JASMINE Cottage ref 915584, Hallsands, Devon - now £599, save £66. Sykes Holiday Cottages is offering £66 off a week's stay at this off this charming cottage on farm in a South Hams valley.

The cottage offers access to a footpath that leads to Hallsands beach and onwards on to the south west coast footpath, the beautiful dog-friendly beach of North Hallsands, and the National Trust clifftops. Price includes seven nights' self-catering at Jasmine Cottage and dogs go free. Accommodation sleeps four for £599. Travel dates April 6- April 13. Offer available for a limited time only.

● To book, visit www.sykescottages.co.uk or phone 01244 617 683.

● KAHUNA restaurant.co.uk



The rugged Newquay coastline



Sarah braves the waves