



We like... 5 STYLISH SELF-CATERING PLACES

- 1 AN ECO-LODGE...** Bluestone, Pembrokeshire (01834 862400, bluestonewales.com). This new environmentally aware resort (above) has 355 beautiful timber lodges, cottages and studios with facilities including a spa and restaurants (from £650 per week).
- 2 A CHIC RETREAT...** The Albion, Deal (01304 380604, dealholidayhome.co.uk). Boutique hotel treatment gives this seafront holiday home bags of style. Sleeps six (£925 per week).
- 3 A SUSTAINABLE HOME...** Rye Bay Beach House, East Sussex (07961 377365, ryebaybeachhouse.com). Sleeping four to six, this eco-friendly property on Camber Sands has a cool, contemporary interior (£610 per week).
- 4 A HOLIDAY HIDEAWAY** Parc Vean, Cornwall (07971 417755, parcvean.com). For traditional style, with an amazing location south of Mevagissey. Use of a Land Rover and sailing boat is thrown in (£695 per week).
- 5 CONTEMPORARY COTTAGES** Northumberland Coastal Retreats (0191 285 1272, coastalretreats.co.uk). A chintz-free, family-friendly, five-star holiday cottage collection (from £600 per week).
Prices based on September 2008.

The slow lane

If, like us, you yearn to take off on a nostalgic sojourn to the sea, why not hire one of these little beauties? Vanilla Splits has launched five split-screen and three bay-window models, restored with bespoke interiors, plus satnav and iPod connections. They cost from £300 for three days (sleeping two in comfort). Call 01243 545725 or visit vanillasplits.co.uk.



HOT HOTEL

Royal Harbour Hotel, Ramsgate

WHAT'S THE BUZZ? This Georgian Grade II-listed building continues to develop under the management of idiosyncratic owner James Thomas. He has drawn on his experience managing top London hotels to create a comfortable space full of personal touches: original paintings – many nautical – line the walls, and visitors can feed their pop nostalgia habit by playing vinyl LPs in the snug.

ANY LUXURIOUS TOUCHES? The most notable is the cinema in the basement. Part of a suite of rooms occupied by Medb Films (next film: *Ruby Blue* starring Bob Hoskins), the cinema is also available to guests on request and has been used by wedding parties and large groups. Other more homely touches include cheese and biscuits laid on to tuck into whenever you fancy and a fire lit in the living-room grate to welcome you on arrival.

BEST SEA VIEW? Half the rooms face the harbour and marina (the chinking of boat rigging is audible), half look out on to the terrace. For the loftiest view, book the cosy cabin room up in the eaves, but only if you are travelling alone: it's a tiny one-bedder.

HOW ABOUT THE FOOD? Breakfast is generous with fresh fruit and yoghurt (plus an entire honeycomb produced by James's brother) served alongside the Full English, croissants and muffins. No evening meals are served.

WHAT WILL IT COST ME? Cabin doubles with sea views, from £98 per night; singles from £78; four-poster doubles with sea views, £138. **Clare Gogerty**
Nelson Crescent, Ramsgate, Kent (01843 591514, royalharbourhotel.co.uk).

coast TRAVEL

GET OUT THERE and discover exciting new places to stay or explore the coast in a *camper van* WORDS *Michele Jameson*

Sea power

More hi-tech than a bucket and spade but just as useful...

- CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT **FOR COASTAL CHARGE** Solar-powered beach bag, £125, rewarestore.com
- FOR SNAPPING WHILE YOU SNORKEL** Camera mask, £89.95, Firebox
- FOR SOUNDS AS YOU SWIM** Freestyle underwater MP3 player, £89, h2olife.co.uk



PHOTOGRAPH BRITAIN ON VIEW FOR WHERE TO BUY. SEE STOCKISTS PAGE