



Cuckoo Down Farm

GLAMPING



Explorations



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Welcome



Becky Sheaves in Blackberry safari tent

Hello!

Hello and welcome to Cuckoo Down Farm's Explorations booklet. If you're planning a fabulous holiday, you've come to the right place. From coastline to castles, days out to dog-friendly pubs, this is your go-to guide to getting the very most out of your glamping stay here. Have fun!

Best wishes,
Becky and John Sheaves



Beaches

Head for the coast

Cuckoo Down Farm lies just a few miles inland of the stunning World Heritage Jurassic Coast. Here are the best beaches to visit during your stay

Sidmouth (EX10 0NW): Charming Regency resort with prom, pretty architecture and a nice safe beach. Better at mid-to-low tide (Google tide times) as it's stony at high tide. To get the best sand, walk to the right as you look out at the sea. At low tide there are excellent rock pools - buy a fishing net and bucket at the shops near the beach. In high season Jurassic Paddle Sports (www.jurassicpaddlesports.com) hires out kayaks and stand-up paddle boards from the beach. If the town centre car parks are full, bear right as you look at the sea for the long-stay car park by the Harbour Hotel.

Branscombe (EX12 3DP): Pretty and unspoilt National Trust beach with good café. Pebbly at high tide but lots of grass by the sea to run around on and sand at low tide (check online for tide times). Great walk from here over the cliffs to Beer if you are feeling energetic (NB this walk is long and steep, not ideal for small kids unless they are sturdy walkers).

Beer (EX12 3ET): Charming fishing village with nice beach (pebbly again), and you can hire a small fishing boat and fishing lines here to go mackerel fishing - inexpensive and fun.

Exmouth (EX8 1BQ): Long sandy beach so this is the best option for guaranteed sand at all states of tide. Be sure to swim in the lifeguarded areas (look for signs) as the tides here can be dangerous in places. Exmouth beach is dog friendly - you can walk your dog at either end of the beach year-round. These two areas are best avoided if you're dog free. Have a think about a Stuart Line Cruise from Exmouth along the coast - they are good fun and a great way to see the coastline www.stuartlinecruises.co.uk

Lyme Regis (DT7 3DH): Longer drive (40 mins) but it's a pretty, historic town and the sandy beach is lovely. Lyme Regis Museum organises fossil hunting walks.



East Devon coastline

Days out



Sidmouth Beach

Time to be together

There is a wealth of wonderful child-friendly days out within a few miles of the farm. Check out these fun activities for the whole family to enjoy

National Trust properties: Killerton, Knightshayes and A La Ronde all offer interesting days out, great gardens and lovely cafes. For details visit www.nationaltrust.org

Wildwood Escot: Stately home turned adventure park with birds of prey, giant wooden climbing frames, indoor soft play. Check out the otter feeding times - adorable!

Seaton Tram: Quirky restored trams (pictured) travel the lovely landscape between historic Colyton and the coast at Seaton. Fun for all the family, with cafes at either end.

World of Country Life: Great day out for younger children with pygmy goats, baby lambs, deer feeding safari (a must!) and lots of excellent play park equipment.

The Donkey Sanctuary: Fun (and free!) day out to see cuddly donkeys, great café and just five miles from the farm. Good signed walks around the sanctuary – the one to Weston Beach is very steep but has really spectacular views.

Bicton Gardens: Great with or without kids, this grand historic garden now has play areas, café, small train, indoor soft play, fountains, grotto, three miles from the farm.

Crealy Devon A very good theme park with lots of rides, animals (inc meerkats) and cafes. Very well done and great option if it's raining, only five miles away.

Raceworld Exeter: Indoor go-karting with a 400m circuit, about four miles from the farm. NB you have to be 5 ft 1 or taller to drive.

Cycling: Haldon Forest, part of the Forestry Commission, does excellent bike hire (including tow-alongs for children) and has signed off-road trails for all abilities (EX6 7XR 01392 833768).

Horse Riding: We are usually able to offer pony rides for small children (5 stone and under) at the farm. Budleigh Riding School offers nice rides and lessons: 01395 442035.

For very young children: Try Bear Town near Cullompton for top-quality indoor play (book first). Friendly Pennywell Farm near Buckfastleigh has lots of small farm animals to meet. The World of Country Life near Exmouth is a lot of fun too (farm-themed play park with animals, rides, cafe etc).

The Eden Project: PL24 2SG 01726 811911 It's a good 1.5-2 hour journey to see the Eden Project in Cornwall but it is spectacular and everyone should visit it at least once. Amazing biomes, lots to see and do plus great food.

Exeter: The Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter cost £10 million to refurbish and recently won national Museum of the Year. It is well worth a visit. Also in Exeter, try the Underground Passages, entrance at 2 Paris Street, to explore the medieval tunnels under the city. Don't forget to check out the beautiful and fascinating Exeter Cathedral, dating back to the 12th century.

Cinema: Sidmouth has the gorgeous 1930s Radway Cinema, with tables and sofas in the upstairs circle (0871 230 3200). Exeter has a Vue and Odeon, plus the Picture House cinema with bar/café, and live music most Thursdays.

Beer Quarry Caves, 01297 680282 EX12 3AS A vast 75-acre underground quarry dating back to Roman times, where the limestone for many famous buildings, including St Paul's Cathedral, was quarried. The hour-long guided tours are really fascinating and an insight into 2,000 years of history - well worth a visit and a good option if it is raining.



Seaton Tram



Mealtimes to remember

With amazing local produce, talented chefs and beautiful locations we are spoilt for choice here when it comes to eating out. Here are our top picks (NB always book first!)

The Rusty Pig: EX11 1HD in Ottery St Mary is a fun, relaxed bistro with food that is absolutely fantastic. Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall is a fan. Dinner is usually a set menu with few choices, let them know if you have dietary restrictions. 01404 815580. ££

The Golden Lion: EX10 0AA, 01404 812881 in Tipton St John is our nearest pub – it is quite a walk though. It has a good chef and great gastropub menu with a nice garden. ££

The Pig at Combe: EX14 3AD 01404 540400 Fabulous small manor house in Gittisham about 4 miles away, with friendly welcome and relaxed, hip approach to dining, very cool atmosphere £££ A cheaper option here is to drop into The Folly, a casual café with wood-fired oven in the grounds. £

Otterton Mill: EX9 7HG 01395 568031 Beautiful 1,000 year old working water mill, now serving excellent teas/light meals, plus craft shops and on a very nice walk along the River Otter to Budleigh Salterton. A real day out. £

The Holt in Honiton: EX14 1LA, 01404 47707 is a lovely pub, run by our wonderful local brewery (Otter Brewery). Good real ale, imaginative food and great service. ££

The Hare and Hounds: EX10 0QQ 01404 41760 Another family-friendly pub, with a playground. The carvery is its speciality and it is a good, affordable place to go in a large family group – we'd particularly recommend the carvery as good value and quality. The pub is enormous, with a garden and play area. Very professionally run. £

The Pea Green Boat: EX10 8BB 01395 514152 Tiny little café/restaurant on the sea front in Sidmouth. Good food and service. ££

Rockfish: EX8 1DU 01395 272100 Run by Westcountry celeb chef Mitch Tonks in a quirky wooden-clad building right on the water in Exmouth (to the right as you look at the sea). Terrific gourmet fish and chips and other ultra-fresh seafood. Dog friendly. £££

The Jack in the Green: EX5 2EE 01404 822240 Properly good place to eat, always in the top 100 British restaurants. Fine dining but with a friendly gastro-pub atmosphere, only 4 miles from the farm. £££

The River Exe Cafe: On a barge in the middle of the River Exe, you'll find a spectacular setting and excellent food. Get there by River Taxi from Exmouth www.riverexecafe.com 07761 116103 £££

Eating out

Lympstone Manor: EX8 3NZ 01395 202040 Michelin-starred restored Georgian manor run by celebrity chef Michael Caines. Dress up! ££££ Michael also runs Mickeys Beach on Exmouth beach for casual seafood, pizza and cocktails, also with amazing views, ££

Heron Farm: EX14 3NZ 01404 46208 Vineyard to explore with superb food and farm shop, eco-playground and general cool vibe. Open daytime only. £

Coldharbour Farm Shop EX11 1QL 01404 814220 Wonderful family-run cafe and farm shop on the edge of Ottery St Mary. Daytimes only, highly recommended. £

The Bowd: EX10 0ND 01395 513328 Very family-friendly with playground and gardens, serving competent pub food. £

The Volunteer Inn: EX11 1BZ 01404 814060 Traditional pub in the centre of Ottery St Mary. Stick to the basics on the menu. Good for a glimpse of proper local Devon pub life, too. Park in Sainsbury's car park. £





Exeter Cathedral



Discover Devon

While you are here, find out more about beautiful Devon and the intriguing places on the doorstep. All these destinations are within 15 miles of the farm

Sidmouth: Our nearest beach but so much more, 5 miles from the farm. We recommend homemade ice cream from Taste Sidmouth, indie shops (especially Woodforde's Perfumery and Gliddon's toy shop) and both Sidmouth Museum and Sidmouth Toy and Model Museum Head for EX10 8NR

Budleigh Salterton: Beautiful Budleigh has a lovely beach (pebbly) and great birdwatching where the River Otter meets the sea. Check out ice cream from the Creamery and book ahead for high tea at Tea and Tittle Tattle. EX9 6 NU

Topsham: Super-charming Topsham has a wealth of lovely shops (Pea & Mint is gorgeous for clothes and gifts) and a fabulous antique centre on its quay. Refresh at The Lighter Inn and explore the pretty Goat Walk by the river Exe, where there is great bird-watching. NB very busy at peak times.

Ottery St Mary: Just a couple of miles from the farm, Ottery is your go-to place for food shopping (Sainsbury's plus indie greengrocer, butcher, baker and fishmonger). There's also a truly great chippy (Rosey's) and a 12th century church well worth a visit. Ottery also has a small museum, lovely cafe (The Coffee Bank, with children's play area) and a terrific walk along the River Otter from the Millennium Green to Tipton St John for lunch at The Golden Lion (book first) EX11 1BW

Exeter: 12 miles from the farm, Exeter is historic and has a great cafe culture. Ancient Gandy Street is said to have inspired JK Rowling's Diagon Alley. You'll find great shopping and fantastic places to eat including a flagship The Ivy. Check out the arts at The Northcott Theatre and The Phoenix Centre.

Beer and Branscombe: Charming Beer (EX12 3ET) has great art galleries and pretty architecture. Hire a small boat here and go mackerel fishing. Smaller Branscombe nearby is also very pretty, with a lovely beach.



Branscombe

Shopping



Greendale Farm Shop

A little retail therapy...

Don't be deceived by the peaceful location of Cuckoo Down Farm. There is plenty of good shopping to be had within a few miles of the farm, from food to gifts and more

Food shopping: West Hill village shop (McColl's) EX11 1TY The shop in our village is a small newsagent-style store, open from 8am to 8pm. It sells groceries, bread, milk, newspapers, veg, wine and has a Post Office counter where you can withdraw cash. It is about ¾ mile from the farm. Directions: Go to the top of the farm lane (which you drove down on arrival). Cross over onto Elsdon Lane. At the end of Elsdon Lane, turn left and the shop will soon be on your right hand side.

Supermarkets: Sainsbury's (EX11 1BW) is our nearest, in the centre of Ottery St Mary. Waitrose (EX10 9GA) is on the edge of Sidmouth, five miles from the farm. Tesco (EX14 2XD) is six miles away on the edge of Honiton. If you would like to order a supermarket delivery, we are at The Barn, Cuckoo Down Farm, EX11 1UE - be sure to book a time slot when you will be here.

Exeter: Our nearest city, this is the place for serious shopping, with John Lewis and lots of well-known stores, 12 miles from the farm. Check out ultra modern Princesshay plus quaint Gandy Street.

Ottery St Mary: Two miles from the farm (EX11 1BW), Ottery has a Sainsbury's plus fishmonger, baker, butcher's (K&M Butcher's) and veg shop (Rabbit & Co). Ottery is our nearest shopping town and has a cafes, restaurants, Boots chemist, doctor's surgery (Coleridge Medical Centre), florist, Chinese and Indian take-aways, fish and chip shop and a really brilliant wine merchant, Christopher Piper, probably the best in Devon for supplying restaurants - it's fun to pop in and ask them to recommend a bottle.

Farm shops: There are some fantastic farm shops near here. Knights Farm Shop is our nearest and you can walk there off road (see page 14) EX11 1RJ. They also do coffees and cakes. Joshua's Harvest Store EX11 1NU (about 3 miles away), has lovely food and a great café plus gifts/homeware. Head along the A3052 towards Exeter for Greendale Farm Shop (EX5 2JU) with cafe, farm animals and great food. In Topsham, Darts Farm Shop (EX3 0QH) has gifts, an Aga shop, and animals to see. Otterton Mill has a lovely farm shop too (EX9 7HG) plus crafts and gifts.



Ottertton Mill



Walk 1: To the cakes and back

This is a lovely there-and-back walk to the local farm shop for coffee and cakes

Distance: About two miles, hilly. Call first to check the shop is open: 07958 548009

NB: For very weary/young children it might be an idea for to walk them there but arrange for one of your party to drive down and collect them from Knights Farm Shop, rather than tackle the steep uphill walk home.

1 Head from Cuckoo Down Farm back up the lane (the one you came down on arrival).

2 When you reach the fork in the lane (just before a house called Rest-A-While), take the sharp right by the public footpath sign and head down the other branch of the unmade farm track. If you find yourself on tarmac, you have gone too far and missed your turning.

3 You will pass a house called Hilden on your right. Head through the kissing gate (mwah!) and carry on all the way down this track (over a stile) until you reach the tarmacked road.

3 Once you reach the tarmacked road, turn right. Knights Farm Shop is the second farm on your left. Walk with caution, there is no verge and high hedges, keep your dogs on leads and hold your children's hands. Knights Farm Shop is well signposted, sells lovely cakes and coffees to take away.



Walking

Here are three lovely walks directly from the doorstep of your glamping tent, each with the chance to check out the beautiful countryside. Did we mention the cake shop and pub?

Walk 2: To the cakes and beyond

A beautiful loop walk with lots of off-road
Distance: About four and a half miles. Good lanes but hilly.

- 1 Follow the directions for Option One until you've had your coffee and cake.
- 2 Turn left out of the farm shop and keep going along the road for about 200 yards. NB be careful of traffic on this road.
- 3 Pass by a lane on your right signed Fluxton Farm. Ignore this lane and stay on the road.
- 4 Take the next lane on the right, beside Fluxton Cottages. Look out for a pretty white house with blue window frames and take that turning.
- 5 Stay on this lane for about a mile. It's steep! When you get to the top of the hill, stop and listen for skylarks singing (in spring and summer).

- 6 Keep going for about a mile until you hit the tarmacked road. Bear right along the road and take the first right, called Lower Broad Oak Road, following the signpost to Broad Oak and West Hill.
- 8 Follow this road for about a mile. At the top of the second hill where the road flattens out you will spot the sign for Cuckoo Down Farm and (hopefully) recognise the farm track you have been along before.
- 9 Go down the farm track, follow the signs to Cuckoo Down Farm - and put your feet up!

Listen out
for skylarks



Walk 3: To the cakes and the pub

Distance: About six miles, hilly. Call first to check the pub is open and book a table if you plan to eat: 01404 812881

NB: You could also walk to the The Golden Lion and arrange for one of your party to drive down and collect you, rather than tackle the uphill walk home.

1 Follow Walk Two as far as Fluxton Cottages. Instead of turning right, stay on the road. Take the next right down a track marked Public Footpath. Go past the small sewage works on your right (sorry!) and then you have a couple of options...

- 2 You can either turn right onto the old railway track or you can carry on across another field until you reach the bank of the River Otter. Turn right and follow the river. Look out for otters and kingfishers.
- 3 Both options will bring you to the village of

Tipton St John where you will cross the cricket pitch, pass the tennis courts on your right and go past a very nice playground (worth a visit!).

- 4 Once you reach the tarmacked road, turn left and The Golden Lion pub is immediately on your right. It does not allow dogs in the pub itself but there is a lovely garden which welcomes dogs (on leads). Always book first if you want to eat, it gets very busy.
- 5 Retrace your steps to find your way home.



www.cuckoodownfarm.co.uk

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