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SOUTHEAST

The Swan at Streatley hotel review

A tempting terrace takes full advantage of the river views at this affordable Thames-side spot

The riverbank scene from the Swan could have been painted by Georges Seurat - pleasure boats cruise beneath weeping willows, terriers trot between deckchairs, friends sip cider on a pristine lawn. Named for the birds that occasionally glide into view, the hotel sits beside the Thames, about 10 miles northwest of Reading, between a pair of red-brick villages so pretty you'll immediately be on Rightmove.

In case it wasn't obvious, the biggest draw is the view. You can take it in from about half of the 47 refurbished rooms, which sprawl along the river in a low-rise hodgepodge of architectural styles - some 18th-century, some 1960s. Number 37 and a few of the other waterfront rooms have balconies, and if you watch carefully from here - or anywhere on the bank - you can spot kingfishers, yellow wagtails and red kites. Otters have been seen further upstream.



STAYCATIONS

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Rooms are simple with trendy touches - a mustard-yellow cushion or vibrant teal headboard, a Dyson tower fan in the corner - and homely details such as jars of stroopwafels and PG Tips. Bathrooms feature torrential rain showers, fragrant Natural Spa Factory products and, in some, angular tubs deep enough to swim in. Don't be tempted by the cheapest rooms, which overlook the car park and lack the rest of the Swan's charm.

Downstairs you have a little bar selling everything from BumbleBee cider to ginger-spice ice cream, and Coppa Club, an airy restaurant filled with pastel sofas, pendant lamps and jungly plants, with a conservatory-style terrace that's inches from the water. The rich crab linguine, with pops of vinegary capers, is the standout dish (£16) on a menu of steaks, sourdough pizzas and burgers. Finish off with sticky toffee pudding studded with crushed honeycomb (£7), before a wander along the river.