

Hotel Endsleigh

Dartmoor Devon

Hotel Endsleigh is a Grade I historic house set in 108 acres of fairy tale woodland, follies and grottos created by Humphry Repton, one of the greatest English landscape designers of the eighteenth century. The Duke of Bedford, who owned a third of Devon, laid the first stone in 1810 for his fishing and hunting lodge, ideally situated on the edge of Dartmoor, as he thought it the prettiest part of his estate.

In 2004 Olga Polizzi bought Endsleigh and restored it as a luxury hotel, designing the rooms in a classically elegant English style, with period furniture, contemporary art, roll-top bathtubs and book-lined shelves.

Many of the 21 bedrooms have magnificent views of the gardens, the River Tamar and the forests stretching beyond into Cornwall. There are four family suites and the thatched Gatekeeper's Lodge is a favourite with children and their parents. Olga Polizzi recently introduced two new suites in the old stables; Suite 21 on the ground floor and Suite 22, known as The Lady Olga Suite, on the first floor, both of which are spacious and full of character.

The food at Endsleigh takes its inspiration from the surrounding countryside, and includes seasonal and locally grown vegetables, game and fish from the South West shores. There is a panelled dining room that is decorated with the crests of the Bedford family, their friends and relatives. Every day, traditional afternoon tea is served, offering an array of cakes, scones and sandwiches.

Outside the dining room, there is a wonderful terrace with a vista of the valley and the longest continuous raised herbaceous border in England with glorious rose walk which runs parallel above. A smaller rose-covered arbour overlooks the children's parterre which is seasonally planted.

Dogs are very welcome at Endsleigh, and they will love the many walks you can take through the gardens. Head Gardener, Ben Ruscombe-King, has a wealth of knowledge and gives a guided tour of the many cascades and the numerous Champion trees.



Photo by Carole Drake

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Fishing has always been at the heart of Endsleigh, and the hotel owns three and a half rods that can be used across the six beats. The ghillie is always happy to show even a novice the ropes. There is also a very good pheasant shoot around the hotel, run by HMR Sporting, offering the finest high Devon birds.

Endsleigh is a place of supreme tranquillity with no noise or light pollution, absolutely no muzak, only the birds singing and the bats squeaking. This is somewhere you can truly see the sky at night, where you can relax, and that you will want to return to again and again.

Nearby is Tavistock, an interesting town, much of it also built by the Bedfords, with a very good farmers' market. Launceston is equidistant and hosts our amazing butcher, Philip Warren. There are endless opportunities for walking on Dartmoor, seven miles from the hotel, and we can recommend a guide who is also a fabulous foraging expert. Dartmoor National Park is a vast moorland; Dartmoor ponies roam its craggy landscape, defined by forests, rivers, wetlands and tors (rock formations). Trails wind through valleys with Neolithic tombs, Bronze Age stone circles and abandoned medieval farmhouses. Not to mention an array of National Trust properties. Cotehele in the Tamar Valley is particularly appealing at Christmas when they hang a 60ft garland in the Great Hall. After visiting Endsleigh, continue south, towards the ever-appealing Cornish coastline and Hotel Tresanton, Olga Polizzi's other Westcountry hotel. At the other end of the South Coast is The Star, Alfriston, in East Sussex that opened as the newest member of The Polizzi Collection in June 2021.

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Olga Polizzi

Olga Polizzi is Deputy Chairman and Director of Design at Rocco Forte Hotels, a company she helped her brother Rocco Forte create; it owns well known, historic hotels worldwide including Brown's in London, the Hotel de Russie in Rome and the Amigo in Brussels.

Olga is the owner of The Polizzi Collection, a group of three elegant hotels across the South of England; Hotel Endsleigh in Tavistock, Devon, Hotel Tresanton in St Mawes, Cornwall and The Star, Alfriston, East Sussex.

Olga is chairman of the Trusthouse Charitable Foundation and is on the board of the Landau Forte Academy Trust and President of the British Italian Society.

Olga is married to the author William Shawcross. She has two daughters, Alex, who is Channel 5's Hotel Inspector and Charlie, who owned and ran Onda in St Mawes for many years and now works as a women's wear buyer for a large fashion company. Her two stepchildren are Eleanor Wolfson and Conrad Shawcross.

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- Opened 2005
- 4 hours from London by car
- 3 and a half by train & taxi
- 21 rooms and suites
- From £280 per night (B&B)
- Dogs welcome
- Restaurant
- Terrace
- Bar
- Sitting room
- Function room
- 108 acre Repton garden
- A mile of Tamar
- Three and a half fishing rods

