

# Cornwall's Dr Dolittle

By Adrian Caffery

**H**ERE'S something you don't see every day – a fox taking food from the outstretched hand of a toddler.

The fox, and his two pals, are as tame as domestic dogs after being rescued by wildlife ranger Gary Zammit and hand-reared at Feadon Farm in Portreath, Cornwall.

The farm is believed to be the only place in Britain where you can feed foxes by hand and the experience made a lasting memory of our stay at the adjacent Gwel an Mor holiday resort.

Gary is something of a local celebrity. A couple of years ago he made national headlines when he taught a young, orphaned heron named Dude how to fly.

When Dude lost his family during a storm, Gary became a surrogate father to the chick, keeping him warm at his Cornwall home and feeding him little fishes.

Gary then began flying lessons by running in a field (with food in his pockets)

flapping his arms and squawking until Dude copied him and eventually took off.

At Feadon Farm, the resident wildlife also includes pigs, snakes, rabbits, squirrels, reindeer and a barn owl, which visitors can try their hand at flying.

Gary, who knows everything there is to know about Cornwall's wildlife and its marine habitats, also leads nature trails, night walks and rock pooling expeditions.

He has a real talent for enthusing others with his passion and convinced us that Britain's wildlife was every inch as fascinating as that found on safari in Africa.

Gwel an Mor, which means 'view of the sea' in Cornish, is a 60-lodge 'village' perched above the harbour town of Portreath, just a ten-minute walk to its golden sands.

The five-star resort also borders the 250-acre Tehidy Country Park which boasts a golf course and nine miles of delightful woodland and lake-side trails.

Tehidy once belonged to the Bassets, a leading mining family who developed Portreath and helped build tramways and railways for the export of copper and tin.

Today, Cornwall's Mineral Tramways Heritage Trail, a 60km, car-free network, can be walked or cycled from Gwel an Mor's gates.

The resort's Scandinavian-style, two and three-bedroom lodges – built with timber from sustainable forests – are spacious, stylish and set in landscaped gardens.

Our 'VIP' lodge boasted a private hot-tub on the sun-deck and wood burner in the lounge – both most welcome on the chilly evenings when we visited in February.

Go 'deluxe' and guests get a gas barbecue, a daily maid service, spa treatments, plus champagne, canapes and a breakfast pack on arrival.

The lodges are 'upside down' with bedrooms and bathrooms downstairs and kitchen and living areas, including a balcony, above to take full advantage of the sea views.

That's except for the resort's Assisted Living lodges, which have living/dining areas, kitchen, bedroom (with electric bed) and wet room at ground level.

Gwel an Mor as a whole is access-friendly and there's a hoist at the resort's indoor pool, where guests will also find a sauna, steam room and gym.

The health and beauty centre offers an extensive menu of wraps, facials, massages, manicures, waxes and eye treatments.

My wife Jayne, in need of some pampering having not long given birth, returned 'a



The fox and the child: Feeding the foxes at Gwel an Mor holiday resort with wildlife ranger Gary Zammit.

new woman' from a soothing, 30-minute head and scalp massage (£35).

Gwel an Mor's bright, contemporary Terrace Restaurant has views to the sea and the outdoor decking is the perfect place to enjoy a Cornish cream tea.

Using the freshest, locally-sourced, ingredients, including herbs from its own garden, the menu is a fusion of Cornish and Mediterranean cuisine.

Jayne and I agreed that our meals were among the best we'd ever eaten.

So for good grub, luxury living and, above all, a really 'wild' time, Gwel an Mor is the year-round resort that's hard to beat.



Sea views: The beach at Portreath and a lodge at Gwel an Mor.

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## Getting There

Gwel an Mor is three miles from the A30, Cornwall's main arterial route. The nearest coach and rail stations are four miles away at Redruth. Prices for a week-long stay start at £429 for a lodge sleeping four or £529 for a six-person lodge during off-peak season. Short breaks (three-night weekend or four-night midweek breaks) start from £319 / £379. Seasonal tariffs, special offers and prices for VIP, Deluxe, M3 Assisted and dog-friendly lodges are available at [www.gwelanmor.com/mail](http://www.gwelanmor.com/mail). Or call 01209 842354.

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