

GETAWAY

ADRIAN CAFFERY takes a family break in Cornwall, where it's so easy to keep the kids entertained

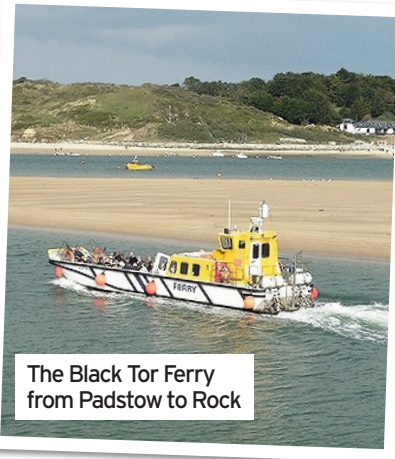
It might sound like the sort of place a stag party ends up at, but there's nothing seedy about Newquay's Lusty Glaze. In fact, as beaches go, it's one of the classiest; where the 'fashionable' might go to top up their tans while sipping on a mai tai. And, I'm sad to report, nobody's eyes glazed over lustily when yours truly stripped down to his swimming shorts at the privately owned cove. It's a beautiful beach with golden sands protected from the wind on three sides by steep cliffs. And if there's a shower there are places you can take shelter. The bar and restaurant provides a lovely setting for breakfasts, lunches and suppers, either soaking up the sunshine on the terrace or cosying up inside by log burners. A cave on the beach, once 200ft deep, was rich in iron ore and the awkward steps from its mouth to the clifftop used by miners until the late 1800s are still visible. The minerals were taken away by little blue boats and the name Lusty Glaze is believed to derive from the Cornish translation of "a place to view blue boats".

The beach is now home to sun-worshippers, adrenaline junkies (there's an abseiling and surfing centre), food lovers, wedding parties and occasionally concert-goers. Considering Lusty Glaze's fashionable reputation, it will come as no surprise to hear that the meals, snacks and drinks are a little on the pricey side. So rather than pay an excessive amount for four ice creams for the family I decided to climb back up the 133 steps to the mobile vendor in the car park. Unfortunately, the kids' 99s had melted by the time I returned. Through their tears, however, I could tell they were grateful to have learned a financial lesson. That 80p I saved will go a long way. The ice cream incident was soon forgotten on our return to White Acres Holiday Park, a 15-minute drive from Newquay, which got a



Towan Island and (inset) Lusty Glaze beach, Newquay

Lusting after beach beauty



The Black Tor Ferry from Padstow to Rock

big thumbs up from Cerys, six, and Owen, two. It was our home for four nights in the Easter holidays and had more than enough to keep them both entertained, even if the sun hadn't been luring us to the beaches. The three outdoor play areas included a Galleon adventure playground that was big enough to set sail on the high seas, and where my daughter made her younger brother walk the plank. They had a splashing time in the indoor swimming pool, which had a separate toddlers' pool with slide, plus a spa bath

and sauna for the grown-ups. There was also a crazy golf course, mini-bowling, a soft play area and a daily schedule of entertainment including bug hunts, pretend play and crafts. Cerys loved the early evening dancing and team games with Sid the seagull and Lizzie the lizard while Owen, in particular, enjoyed storytime with Pipsqueak the mouse. We stayed in a Coverack caravan, which was new in 2016. It had a central lounge area with bedrooms and wc / showers at both ends, making it ideal for families or couples sharing. The caravan benefitted from a well-equipped kitchen, double glazing, central heating, a washer dryer, flatscreen TV with soundbar and DVD player, and verandah with outdoor furniture. Besides families, the park also appeals to anglers. It's an unusual mix but if there's a keen angler in

your tribe then this could be the perfect holiday destination for them. There's a tackle shop and resident experts to help you choose which of the 13 lakes within the 184 acres of countryside to fish, and how to approach them. Weekly matches take place for everyone staying at White Acres, covering all levels of ability, plus for ladies and juniors weekly tuition is available. Sadly, I don't know my rods from my reels so the closest I got to a peaceful day spent by the still waters was a lovely breakfast on the lakeside cafe's terrace. Instead, I was tasked with making the most of the fine weather we were blessed with during our short break, which is pretty easy in this part of Cornwall. Besides Lusty Glaze, we visited two more of Newquay's 11 beaches. Cerys and Owen loved Mawgan Porth, just north of the town's airport, which

had a waterfall to clamber under and some 'rapids' to manoeuvre across. And at Towan Beach in the centre of Newquay we all admired the 90ft high, 100ft long suspension bridge that links the mainland to the tiny Towan Island. Squeezed onto the private island - it's one of the most photographed in the country - is a three-bedroomed 1930s house which an elderly, aristocratic couple recently sold for £1 million. They had previously complained about parties on the beach below but claimed they sold up because steps either side of the Edwardian bridge were proving too difficult. The couple once applied to the Guinness Book of Records to have Towan Island officially recognised as the world's smallest inhabited island. But officials ruled against them as it is technically an outcrop (it is only completely surrounded by water at high tide).



Cloud Bridge at The Eden Project



On the Camel Trail

The highlight of our holiday was a family bike ride along the Camel Valley - an 18-mile trail that passes through some of the most spectacular scenery in the south-west. Surfaced, virtually level and largely traffic-free, the trail follows a disused railway line between Wenfordbridge, Bodmin, Wadebridge and the coastal town of Padstow. We collected our bikes from Bridge Bike Hire in Wadebridge, costing £47 for two adult bikes (paying a little extra for comfier seats), one child's bike and a trailer for Owen. Cycling the five miles to Padstow, it was clear to see why the Camel Trail is the most popular ride in the UK - the open views across the Camel estuary are a joy to behold. The flatness of the trail makes it easy for all ages and abilities, although Cerys' little legs mysteriously 'cramped up' as we passed an ice cream seller halfway along. Bikes are left outside Padstow and a short walk takes you into the harbour and the array of shops and gastronomic delights that the pretty fishing village is well known for. From Padstow you can enjoy some fantastic clifftop walks or, like us, you can catch the Black Tor ferry across the Camel Estuary to the village of Rock. For somewhere so sandy, Rock has a

fairly inappropriate name. It derives from the local quarry which supplied rocks used as ballast by ships unloading their cargo across the river. Rock is reputed to be home to more millionaires than anywhere else in Cornwall, and it has the highest proportion of second homes in the county. Occasionally referred to as "Chel-sea-on-Sea", "Britain's Saint-Tropez" and the "Kensington of Cornwall", exclusive villas and apartments are discreetly hidden amongst the trees. Businessman Mohamed Al-Fayed and singer Jay Kay have been known to arrive by helicopter. David Cameron goes for his favourite beer, Doom Bar, which is brewed there. Rock also boasts one of the only two Michelin-starred restaurants in Cornwall, and owing to its sheltered waters, it's a haven for water-based leisure pursuits. But we were only interested in its beautiful beach, which stretches for a mile into the bay. The water is unusually calm and clear, making it great for kids to paddle in, and the beach is fringed with high dunes which provide the perfect spot for a picnic with a view. Cycling back to Wadebridge - and over an iron bridge which once carried trains across a creek - we reflected on a family day out that will live with us

forever. After checking out at White Acres (which, I should also mention, has a convenience store, fish and chip shop and smart restaurant) we went to the nearby Camel Creek Adventure Park. The wet and wild rides there were perfect for our two - even Owen was big enough for the 'white knuckle' ones - the staff were really friendly and, best of all, there were no queues. It's a great place to go whatever the weather, with animal encounters, a massive soft play centre and an outdoor (yes, outdoor) play area that are all under cover. The lack of queues meant we saved enough time to be able to visit the dramatic global garden that is the Eden Project, 30 minutes away, for a couple of hours before closing. We slowly ascended the path in the giant Rainforest Biome and the kids soon forgot about the increasingly muggy conditions when they discovered the 23-metre wobbly rope bridge. And their smiles widened further when they discovered the steam bridge in which every couple of minutes they could disappear into clouds of cooling vapours. You wouldn't Adam and Eve how much fun they had - both at Eden and in Cornwall as a whole.



White Acres Holiday Park, Newquay, Cornwall



NEED TO KNOW

■ **ADRIAN CAFFERY** and family were guests of Parkdean Resorts' White Acres Holiday Park, Newquay, Cornwall. In October half-term, prices start from £299 for a three-night break, staying in a Trevellas Caravan. To book call 0330 1234850 or visit parkdeanresorts.co.uk



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