STARGAZING BREAKS IN EXMOOR'S DARK SKIES RESERVE


Image: Tony Wright

Have you ever looked up into the sky and thought about what is out there?

Exmoor National Park is a fantastic place to see the stars and gaze into space. Being Europe's first International Dark Sky Reserve, it makes for a popular place to look beyond and see what is out there. It was chosen as a Dark Sky Reserve as it is one of only a few places in England that isn't spoilt by light pollution, so much can be seen with the naked eye. Imagine what you can see with a telescope!

For several years now, the Yarn Market Hotel has been running Stargazing breaks twice a year. Guests get to explore the stars and learn more about them from the excellent guide, Terry Evans, who is Chairman of the Crewkerne & District Astronomical Society. From amateur to professional, there is always more to learn. They often include in the break a visit to a mobile planetarium which guests have reported is a fantastic experience.

This years break is from 25th to 27th October 2024 and is run at the same time as Exmoor National Park's Dark Skies Festival so there is a great opportunity to join in other events for anyone wishing to make the most of a longer stay in Dunster.

As well as coming for one of the Dark Skies breaks, Dunster is well worth a visit at any time of year. Very little has changed in this village down the years; the great castle still dominates the view of the High Street, the octagonal medieval Yarn Market still looks as it did in the Middle Ages and right next to it is the charming Yarn Market Hotel. If it's comfort, friendliness and fine food you're after then this is just the place to stay. To say that it's only a hotel is perhaps to be rather a little disingenuous; this is a hub of activities, helping those with their own brand of passions to enjoy them to the full during their stay; photography clubs, nature spotting, cricket and bowling tours, book club or craft retreats, classic car rallies, cultural and historical tours; the list goes on, even chess and scrabble tournaments if that's your preferred enjoyment.

Using the hotel as a base, guests can enjoy rambling around Dunster and its many quaint and out-of-the-ordinary shops, also taking in the interesting twin-wheeled watermill at the foot of the castle's hill where flour is ground for sale. Dunster's church dedicated to St. George was the inspiration behind that favourite childhood hymn 'All Things Bright and Beautiful'. Wandering to your heart's content, you'll hear the distant howl of a steam engine's whistle; the West Somerset Railway, the longest standard gauge steam railway in England, huffing its way from nearby Minehead through Tolkienesque countryside to Bishops Lydeard.

The hotel welcomes groups of all sizes and the team are happy to assist group leaders in planning an itinerary to see the best of the Dunster and Exmoor area.

Familiarisation visits for Group Organisers can be arranged and for information about these and the Hotel generally please contact hotel@yarnmarkethotel.co.uk or telephone 01643 821425. Or why not enter the competition for the opportunity to win a free stay.
For a quick insight into the many attributes of Exmoor, open the YouTube link **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDhxiYqj-1o** for a 12 minute video.

READER OFFER

A discount of £50 per room per stay at the Yarn Market Hotel for any booking for 3 nights or longer during 2024 or 2025

To qualify:- Book direct with the hotel tel 01643 821425 or by email hotel@yarnmarkethotel.co.uk mentioning "Discover Britain for Groups £50 offer"

Offer limited to Group Organisers and Leaders. Maximum four per group

COMPETITION

Win a two night stay to a Dark Skies break at the Yarn Market Hotel, Dunster, in Exmoor.

THE YARN MARKET HOTEL WAS A FINALIST IN BOTH THE 2018 AND 2019 GROUP TRAVEL AWARDS FOR THE BEST INDIVIDUAL HOTEL IN THE SMALL HOTELS CATEGORY.

**THE PRIZE A 2 NIGHT STAY FOR DINNER, BED AND BREAKFAST, FOR 2 PEOPLE ON ONE OF OUR BI-ANNUAL DARK SKIES STARGAZING BREAKS -
THE NEXT ONE IS 25TH TO 27TH OCTOBER 2024**

SUBMIT ENTRIES by email to hotel@yarnmarkethotel.co.uk giving the name of your group and quoting

"Discover Britain for Groups Competition"

**TERMS and CONDITIONS
Closing Date 31st August 2024
Only one entry permitted per group,
The Yarn Market Hotel will notify the winner by 7th September 2024**