

The gurus at Welcome Beyond pick the coolest places to stay in Europe

Away from it all

Aufberg 1113, Piesendorf, Austria

Nestling in the midst of the Austrian Alps, where the air is spiced with the scent of coniferous forest, Aufberg 1113 is a mountain lodge graced with lovely views of a valley on one side and a glacier on the other.

Sparrow's Nest is the downstairs apartment, with natural stone floors and a view framed like a picture on the wall.

It sleeps two to three and has an open fireplace and a patio from where you can watch the sun set over the mountains.

Swallow's Nest, the bigger apartment, sleeps three to four. It has an open fireplace, a bath tub next to the bed and a free-floating terrace high up in the air.

Details: Prices start at €190 per night for Sparrow's Nest based on two people sharing.



10 best
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Rustic Retreats

La Classe, Denee, Belgium

La Classe is a great place for a family gathering.

Sleeping up to 21 people, the huge brick building from 1863 used to house a school on the first floor and a town hall on the second.

Each of the seven bedrooms represents a classroom with a different subject — children go crazy when they see the old school chairs hanging on the main wall of the kitchen.

Set in one of the most beautiful parts of Belgium, only five minutes away from the Mollignée Valley, there's a huge bar stretching nine metres long, a Wurlitzer juke box and a small cinema that plays Hitchcock classics on surround sound.

Details: Prices start at €2,100 for 21 people or €210 per person per week.



Juvet Landscape Hotel, Valldal, Norway

On a sheer river bank in an isolated landscape near Norway's beautiful western fjords, Juvet is a nature-lover's dream.

Some compare its stark, cube-like cabins to a James Bond baddie's hideaway.

The interior is minimal and quite dark, giving you the impression of being inside a camera with the window as the lens. Inside the seven cabins, the

timber walls are bare and the only furniture is a bed, a lamp and a couple of lounge chairs.

The surrounding area is an adventurer's paradise, with exhilarating skiing, river rafting and spectacular hiking. After all that, lie back in the spa and soak up the atmosphere.

Details: Prices start at €300 per night for two people, including breakfast.

Casa Talia, Sicily, Italy

Inspired by the intimate layout of Arabic houses in the Medina, these lovingly restored family houses are scattered around a gorgeous garden and blend in perfectly with the old village centre.

Each room has a separate entrance from the garden and a private terrace with amazing views of the Modica, known as the town of 100 churches.

Stroll around the village to get a taste of real Sicilian life away from the tourists or stay in and bask under the olive trees to escape the blazing sun.

Details: Prices start at €130 per night for a double room and include breakfast.

Berge, Aschau im Chiemgau, Germany

Set in glorious alpine scenery with Lake Chiemsee on one side and the mountains on the other, this minimalist guesthouse has 13 rooms, simple in style with meticulous attention to detail.



Peace reigns here. There are no TVs but each room has a small library of classics you always wanted to read.

Curl up with one of them or head to the communal 'Grosse Stube' (pictured) to cook, socialise or relax around an open fire. **Details:** Prices start at €100 per night for a double room.



Son Gener, Majorca, Spain

Hidden away in the quiet north-eastern part of the island, Son Gener is an oasis of peace and relaxation.

A derelict 18th-century farmhouse has been brought back to life by a local architect, creating a rustic hotel and spa.

Ten luxurious rooms with private terraces are elegantly decorated in soothing tones: nothing

in excess, just a carefully selected mixture of the old and new where every corner, tap or vase seems 'in sync' with the spirit of the place.

With two sleek outdoor pools, a romantic, candlelit indoor pool and a relaxing spa area, you are spoiled for choice.

Details: Prices start at €300 per night for a junior suite sleeping two and include breakfast.



Treehotel, Harads, Sweden

Floating high up in pine trees, deep inside the woods of northern Sweden, this unique hotel has wowed the world of architecture.

There are six futuristic cabins, set about 50m apart, each sleeping two to six people.

Beds are positioned to give uninterrupted views of the valley and forest, underfloor heating eases the chill and Scandinavian home cooking, such as reindeer meatballs and smoked elk, is laid on by owner Britta.

Husky-dog safaris, ice fishing and mountain biking are some of the activities on tap nearby, and in winter, the forest is illuminated by the Northern Lights.

Details: Prices start at SEK3,500 (€390) per night for two people sharing and include breakfast.



Alemanys 5, Girona, Spain

Set in the heart of Girona's medieval quarter, overlooking the pretty Plaça de Sant Domènec, Alemanys 5 houses two sleek apartments. It can be rented as an entire unit, sleeping 11.

This 16th-century house has been carefully restored in a contemporary style while respecting its ancient feel. There's a duplex on the upper two floors, with a cosy fireplace for chilly nights

and a spectacular terrace for al fresco dining. The smaller ground-floor apartment boasts a private garden and pool.

Guests receive a warm welcome by caretakers Montse and Tony, who will rustle up breakfast and do your grocery shopping if you're really feeling lazy.

Details: Prices start at €240 per night based on two people sharing.

Indulgence Divine, Vittoriosa, Malta

This romantic 16th-century house in the historic town of Vittoriosa is a peachy getaway for couples.

It features an ice-white kitchen, a funky dining area and a large upstairs lounge with secluded roof terrace — perfect for cocktails under the stars.

The en suite bedroom was once a private chapel and features

arched stone walls, a massive Indian batik and a shower for two.

The nearby waterfront is peppered with cosy wine bars and cafés and local museums and markets are within walking distance.

Details: Prices start at €90 per night for two people sharing.



Château du Chiron, Limousin, France

A three-acre walled park gently follows the contours of the landscape to the entrance of this picture-perfect castle.

It sleeps up to 12 in seven individually designed bedrooms with solid wood floors, stone fireplaces and shuttered windows.

The outdoor pool, surrounded by comfy loungers, is the perfect spot to relax and unwind. Owners Nicholas and James are charming and always at hand to help. James is also a passionate cook with rave reviews from former guests.

Details: Prices start at €2,500 per week for up to 12 people sharing.

To book any of these properties, visit WelcomeBeyond.com