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Cool castles ... around the UK



1 Roch Castle Pembrokeshire

Haverfordwest meets Hong Kong at this one-time Norman stronghold. Perched dramatically on a volcanic plug overlooking St Brides Bay, the Pembrokeshire Coast national park and the Preseli hills, Roch Castle has five-star bedrooms that can be booked on a B&B basis – or you can rent the whole thing. Restored by architect Keith Griffiths (who grew up in the area but is based in Hong Kong) it reopened last year and now sleeps 12, and also has a gym, a study, a chapel

and a rooftop sunroom. With its sleek lime render, designer lighting and hi-tech dehumidification system, it's the antithesis of your typical damp and draughty castle.
● 01422 323200, celticcastles.com, from £4,700 a week self-catering; doubles from £117.50 a night on a B&B basis

2 Castle of Park Dumfries & Galloway

Built with stones from ruined Glenluce Abbey in the 16th century, altered in the 18th and restored in the late 20th,



this tower house now sleeps seven. It has a haunting setting above Luce Bay, and the castle's plain exterior hides a fairytale core with huge stone fireplace, colourful ceiling mural and turret staircase; its deep stone walls, wooden floors and antique furnishings giving a rare insight into life as a Jacobean laird.
● 01628 825925, landmarktrust.org.uk, from £593 a week

3 Doyden Castle Cornwall

This diminutive cliffside fortress outside Port Isaac sleeps just two and

comes with a hefty dollop of romance. It was built in the 19th century as the pleasure house for a local bon viveur, and the decadence remains. Wake in the large first-floor bed and you can watch the sea from under the covers. In the cosy sitting room, breakfast beside mullioned windows or snuggle up in the evenings by a log fire. The castle is also well-placed for days spent surfing in Polzeath or hiking along the South West Coast Path to feast at one of Nathan Outlaw's restaurants.
● 0844 800 2070, nationaltrustcottages.co.uk, from £690 a week



rebuilt from its ruined state by the Pooley family (one of whom is an interior designer) over many years and now sleeps 12. Get there early to bag the vast Laird's Room, with its four-poster bed and freestanding bath.
● 020-7584 3223, fortercastle.com, £4,750 a week (£396pp)

5 Peverell's Tower Kent

Part of Dover Castle, this tower was built at the behest of Henry III to add to the castle's defences and once served as a prison. These days most guests are clamouring to get in though. It sleeps two and is one of a range of cottages run by English Heritage, with a sympathetic but contemporary style – buttercream paintwork, Shaker-esque kitchen, simple wooden furniture. There's also a roof terrace. Pack your binoculars – on a clear day there's a chance you'll be able to see across to France.
● 0870 333 1187, english-heritage.org.uk, from £649 a week
Rhiannon Batten

4 Forter Castle Perthshire

Treading just the right line between heritage and overblown Scottish kitsch, this tastefully renovated 16th-century keep is decorated with heathery tartan rugs, tweed cushions, aged leather and the low atmospheric glow of polished pewter. The castle, in Glenisla outside Blairgowrie, was



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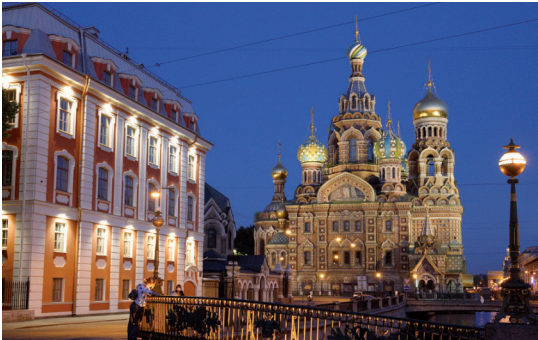


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