

A room with a view on the shores of Lake Windermere

BY WENDY ROBERTS

YOU can't fail to be impressed when you arrive at the Lakeside Hotel – nestled on the shores of Lake Windermere.

Even before you step into the lobby you get the feeling you're going to be spoiled at the 17th century coaching inn. A welcome smile from the friendly bell boy marked the start of our wonderful weekend stay.

We booked a family room – which had a double bed and bunk beds for our two children. The suite was spacious and was a hit with my boys when they discovered they had their own TV.

Most of the 75 rooms in the hotel offer breathtaking views of the lake and each one has been individually decorated to give returning guests variety as well as absolute luxury.

Several rooms feature private gardens and ground floor rooms have their own terraces. The hotel also boosts

FACTFILE

WHAT: The Lakeside Hotel is just a stone's throw away from the shore of Lake Windermere, Newby Bridge, Cumbria, LA12 8AT. It is internationally recognised as an AA 4* hotel and was winner of the Cumbria Tourism's Large Hotel of the Year. For five years, it also won the prestigious title, Hotel Loo of the Year!

INFORMATION: Find out more about the hotel at www.lakesidehotel.co.uk.

executive lodge suites, which have two double rooms and are set by the lakeshore with a private sauna, patio and garden (there's even a rowing boat at your disposal).

On our first night, we booked a table in the John Ruskin's Brasserie and enjoyed delicious steak and homemade chips. The children were delighted when they discovered they could



The Lakeside Hotel has a stunning location on the shores of popular Lake Windermere.

create their own meal from their menus. They were equally impressed when their supper arrived with a note from the chef, telling them who'd cooked their food.

After dinner, we enjoyed coffee in the Panelled Bar and snuggled up on one of the family sofas near the real fire.

There are beautiful flower displays everywhere and in the evening staff light lovely oil burners which make every room welcoming.

The conservatory, which

overlooks the hotel's landscaped gardens, comes to life at night too. Whilst we were there, guests enjoyed a dinner dance and, after their meal in the Lakeview Restaurant, staff unveiled a dance floor and a band arrived to entertain everyone.

The following day, after the most fantastic breakfast, we bought tickets for a Windermere Lake cruise and enjoyed a 45-minute ride to nearby Ambleside – a pretty village oozing charm and several lovely shops.

The boat ride had to be one of the highlights of the weekend – especially for our children, who enjoyed their voyage.

The views were fantastic and I enjoyed seeing some of the million pound mansions nestled in secluded bays along the way. Our skipper wouldn't reveal who was lucky enough to live in some of these luxury water-side pads – but he did hint that well-known sporting stars had been linked to some of the more spacious homes.

Back at the hotel, it was time to sample the Lakeside spa, with its 17-metre pool and warm Jacuzzi.

There's also a sauna, steam room, gym and three beautifully-decorated treatment rooms using Aveda products.

This facility was a huge hit for us and we really took advantage of it. We got changed in our room, grabbed the luxury robes from our bathroom and walked down to the spa area.

You don't actually have to venture out, but the Lakeside

Hotel is close to all the popular tourist attractions.

The nearby Lakeland Motor Museum is fantastic and has a host of vintage and veteran, weird and wonderful motorcars on display.

The Lakeside Hotel proved a fabulous place to stay and staff pride themselves on giving guests the luxury they deserve. It's now recognised as the best four star hotel on the shores of Lake Windermere – and I recommend a visit.

We were disappointed to be going home.

DISCOUNT OFFER

DERBY Telegraph readers can enjoy a £100 discount on their stay at the Lakeside. Email your name and address to sales@lakesidehotel.co.uk to receive your money-off voucher. It will be valid until December 22, 2011. To make a reservation call 01539 53000.

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The entrance to the Lakeside Hotel, which is on Lake Windermere.

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The Peak District is England's 'plum'



James Berresford, chief executive of VisitEngland.

THE Peak District is one of just four areas poised to work closely with national tourist board VisitEngland as "attract brands" to persuade more people to holiday at home.

James Berresford, chief executive of VisitEngland, revealed more details of its key role as a top-flight "destination of distinction" over the coming year at Visit Peak District & Derbyshire's 2011 Tourism Conference.

Likening England's leading tourism destinations to a bowl of "lovely pieces of fruit", he described the Peak District as a "plum" that would be used to tempt tourists to go on to sample other areas of the country