

Client: Cumbria Tourism
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WHERE TO STAY



LAKE WINDERMERE,
CUMBRIA

COUNTRY HOUSE

LINTHWAITE HOUSE

LOCATION A five-minute drive from Windermere, on a hill overlooking the middle stretch of the lake and the rolling Cumbrian hills.

CHARACTER A traditional country house hotel, with colonial-style furniture and ornaments and the genteel atmosphere of an Agatha Christie novel. Canapés and drinks are served in the drawing room before dinner.

ROOMS There are 32 rooms in traditional or contemporary styles, some with lake or garden views. An extension has been built to house five ultra-modern rooms with private terraces, including a stunning suite with a retractable glass-roof panel.

FOOD Take lunch or a well-earned post-hike tea on the terrace or conservatory. Afterwards comes a four-course dinner with excellent wines in the main restaurant, which is candlelit and atmospheric by night. This is also where breakfast is served.

WE LIKE The terrace overlooking the lake is a perfect spot for cocktails while you watch the sunset. The hotel's location is useful for exploring the local literary attractions: Beatrix Potter's Hill Top home is a walk away and Dove Cottage and Rydal Mount, where Wordsworth lived, are a short drive away.

NOT SO KEEN The private tarn is a great addition to the hotel, but could do with better upkeep. Some bathrooms are small and would benefit from more light.

ESSENTIALS 015394 88600; www.linthwaite.com. Doubles from £220 (peak season until October 31), including breakfast.

STAY A LITTLE LONGER

For longer stays in the Lake District, it is worth looking into renting a cottage, especially if you are travelling in a group or as a family – the chances are it will work out cheaper than a hotel; the area is full of them, with plenty of choice as regards price and location.

The Cumbria Tourism board (golakes.co.uk) can help find the ideal cottage, whether it is in or close to lively Windermere or something a little more hidden ideal for hiking. The site can also help with finding and booking all three hotels reviewed (among many others) and advise on the best walks and historical or literary places of interest.



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SECOND HOME

THE SAMLING

LOCATION A few hundred feet above the north-eastern part of Lake Windermere, set in a private 67-acre estate of grounds and landscaped gardens dotted with contemporary sculptures.

CHARACTER A hilltop hideaway tucked up and away from Windermere, with a fantastic view of the lake, The Samling was built in the 1780s and has the feel of a large, sumptuously decorated private home with outlying

cottages. William Wordsworth used to come here to pay his rent.

ROOMS Five double rooms in the main house and six suites fashioned from stone-and-timber cottages. They are all decorated individually, some with Oriental furnishings and fabrics, others with traditional tartans and neutral colours; all have luxurious bathrooms and comfortable sofas from which to sit and admire the view.

FOOD Breakfast can be a hearty doorstep bacon sandwich or eggs locally smoked salmon, served in your room. If you want a treat for dinner, splash out on the tasting

menu, which is packed with seasonal, local produce in delicate portions, along with the specially selected wines.

WE LIKE The home away from home feel – there is nothing cold or corporate about this boutique hotel. The rooms are comfortable, with beautifully chosen furnishings in warm earth colours, exposed beams and quirky antiques. If you take a suite, with their cosy sitting rooms, open fireplace and luxurious bathrooms, you'll feel like as if you could stay for months.

NOT SO KEEN The high prices for extras: £10 for two plain hot chocolates should have been laced with brandy at that price; similarly, a small glass of wine will set you back at least a tenner.

The approach is up a very steep hairpin driveway, difficult to negotiate at night or in the face of oncoming traffic.

ESSENTIALS 01539 431922; www.thesamlinghotel.co.uk. Doubles from £95 per person per night, including breakfast.

ON THE WATER

LAKESIDE HOTEL

LOCATION The major selling point of this hotel is its setting. On the picturesque southern shores of Lake Windermere, it is the only hotel in the area right on the lake's edge, with swans and ducks pootling about on the lawn, and the lake stretched out for miles to the north.

CHARACTER The hotel was formerly a 17th-century coaching inn, and has kept some of its original features, such as oak panelling and timbers, but has been extended with a new conservatory, modern spa; its stables were converted in the late Seventies into additional bedrooms.

ROOMS There are 75 rooms, including seven suites, which are comfortable and well

appointed, if a little old-fashioned in appearance. Most rooms overlook the lake, but it is well worth reserving one in advance. Children can enjoy the wonders of their own bunk-bed bedroom.

FOOD Have a drink in the atmospheric, oak-panelled bar, with its original 17th-century timbers and authentic feel. There are three restaurants, one offering

fine dining in a formal setting; a brasserie, which is good for quick, simple meals; and a conservatory, which serves up a marvellous cream tea.

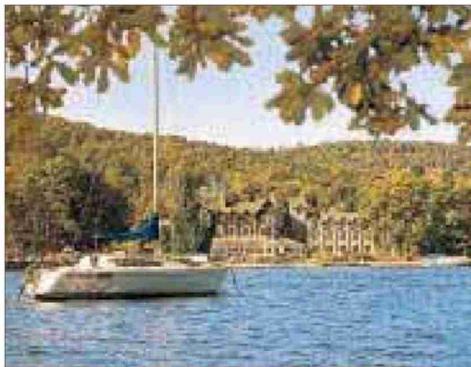
WE LIKE The modern spa with its tempting 55ft swimming pool and the fantastic, therapeutic spa treatments on offer, from full body wraps to reviving facials; and the tranquil gardens leading to the lake

from where you can hire a rowing boat and paddle to a peaceful spot of your choosing.

NOT SO KEEN The rooms can suffer a little from noise in the corridors. The main dining restaurant feels a little stuffy and would benefit from a makeover.

ESSENTIALS 01539 530001; www.lakesidehotel.co.uk. Premium doubles £275, including breakfast. Prices drop the more nights you stay.

CATALINA STOGDON



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Literary links: Linthwaite House would not be out of place in an Agatha Christie novel, and is close to sites associated with Wordsworth and Beatrix Potter

