



**RELAXING:**  
Lakeview  
conservatory

courses, or meals like a very posh version of fish and chips complete with newspaper.

Again desserts were a highlight, especially the chocolate fondant with salted caramel ice cream.

After all that eating, a bracing walk on the fells was on the cards and the hotel can provide routes and suggestions for all abilities. Sadly this writer is not a particularly hardy soul and is easily deterred by rain.

So instead we headed for a stint in Lakeside's gym, which is alongside its swish indoor 17-metre pool, Jacuzzi, sauna and steam room. All are solely for the use of hotel guests.

Also in the complex is the hotel's spa, which manages to take relaxation to a whole new level.

A range of treatments are on offer, including from natural beauty purveyors Aveda.

I tried the Elemental Nature Facial, which was designed to restore balance to the skin. My therapist Stephanie did a fantastic job using gorgeous essential oils in the process of cleansing, exfoliating, mask therapy and moisturising. Afterwards my skin looked amazingly bright and felt silky soft.

With all these comforts at the hotel, we would have been happy to remain there.

But we wanted to see what else the Lakes had to offer and found the options were plentiful.

The hotel shares its car-park with the Aquarium of the Lakes, a popular

attraction with younger visitors, who can now see otters in an underwater tunnel as well as an array of other watery wildlife.

Next to the aquarium is a stop on the Lakeside and Haverthwaite Railway which runs steam trains on the historic branch line at the southern point of Lake Windermere.

Also right outside Lakeside Hotel is the Windermere Lake Cruises dock. A leisurely – given the 10mph speed limit on the lake – boat trip takes visitors to the towns of Bowness or Ambleside. There are also a number of other cruises run from various points on the lake with tickets available through the hotel or from the kiosk outside.

Further afield, a short drive up the quieter western edge Windermere brings you to the picturesque village of Sawrey, location of Hill Top. This little house was Beatrix Potter's cottage and now visitors from all over the world are drawn there to see the setting for some of her best-loved books.

Owned by the National Trust, the house is as she would have known it and the knowledgeable guides have some fascinating stories.

Potter fans would also enjoy the pretty village of Hawkshead nearby, where her original watercolours are on display in the Beatrix Potter Gallery. In the Lake District there's a stunning view at every turn and something interesting around every corner. But for us, nothing beat sitting in the comfortable conservatory of the Lakeside Hotel, looking out over the still, deep waters of Windermere.

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**LEISURELY CRUISE:** Lake Windermere



**CASUAL DRINK:**  
John  
Ruskin's  
Bar

