

OUT & ABOUT WITH YOUR DOG TRAVEL, HOLIDAYS & ADVENTURE

DOGFRIENDLY

NUMBER 65 £3.99

NORTHUMBERLAND

**The Bothy
at Reedsford**

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

**The Lodge
at Duxford**

NORFOLK

**The Bungalow
is a great little
home from home**



**DOGFRIENDLY
PHOTO COMPETITION**

**You've got
to be in it
to win it**

HEALTH & WELLBEING

**Deal with ticks,
wasp stings and
adder bites**

TRAINING GUIDE

**Winning ways with
fear aggression**

Welcome back!

**Three happy owners keen
to see you again this year**

Why visit
CAMBRIDGESHIRE

**Where to eat, walk, sleep and find great days
out in this leafy part of middle England**



Stallion Valley has been renovated by its owners to a particularly high standard

Tried & tested **Wales**

Bernie and Tilly are both rescue dogs



Stallion Valley, Ceredigion

Hannah Istead heads to Ceredigion with her two labs Bernie and Tilly for a beautiful escape-from-it-all break

After the year we've had, who doesn't need some time away? Spending most of 2020 being in a local lockdown has meant we've not only realised how lucky we are to live in Wales, but also how much of it there is still to explore.

At the start of November we headed to Ceredigion in west Wales for a stay at Stallion Valley, a beautiful cottage surrounded by the rolling Welsh hills. We took our two larger than life chocolate Labradors Bernie and Tilly for a trip away before the rush of Christmas began.

Both of our dogs are rescues, eight-year-old Tilly is a new addition to our family after rehoming her in the summer and Bernie is two. This was our first trip with Tilly but

New Forest ponies are everywhere you look!



Bernie loves going out in the car for a surprise adventure.

As our bars of signal went down, their excitement went up and they couldn't wait to explore all the fields and hills we could see out of the car window. The accommodation was easy to find and we parked right outside the property which was brilliant when you have a car full of things – who knew dogs packed so much!

When we arrived we were greeted by Mick and their two friendly dogs in the back garden. We instantly felt at ease and safe despite it being November during the pandemic, all the measures had been taken to make sure there were no problems with our stay. Mick and Julie have really thought of everything when it

Tried & tested **Wales**

comes to their accommodation, so we could relax for a couple of nights.

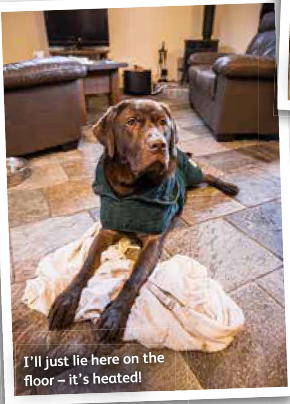
Situated on just over three acres of land at the end of a 400 metre stone farm track is 'The Byre', a rustic two bedroom cottage which sleeps four with a double and two single beds. There are no stairs in the house so it's ideal if you prefer a property without steps. It was spotlessly clean, although not for long when our two Labradors arrived. Luckily everything is wipeable so we didn't spend the whole time on edge worrying about our dogs making a mess inside.

We arrived to find six of their delicious free range eggs waiting for us which was a lovely surprise as we decided to bring our own food and drink and cook at home so we could spend more time inside by the fire. There are all the cooking facilities you need and shops just a short drive away in the nearest town. The kitchen and bathroom were spacious and due to Covid restrictions we brought our own towels and bedding for this trip but we were more than happy to do that.

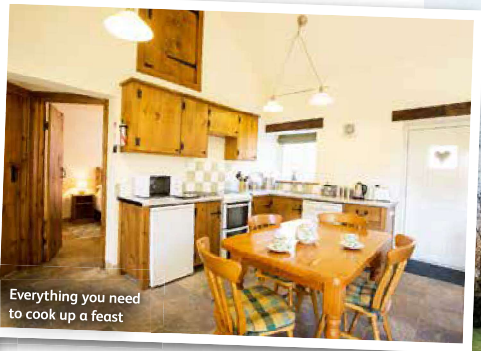
There is also another property next door 'The Mill' which is slightly bigger and sleeps

six with three bedrooms and two bathrooms. There were guests staying in that property but it felt private and not overlooked, other than to see their dogs running around the garden too.

It was great to hear about the history of the properties and the renovation that



I'll just lie here on the floor – it's heated!



Everything you need to cook up a feast

Mick and Julie have completed after buying the farm in 2002 to create beautiful holiday accommodation. They have really thought about all of the dog friendly features which Bernie and Tilly loved, especially the heated stone floors for when they fancied a good sleep after a day out.

After we arrived we headed for a short walk to stretch our legs and went down to the fenced off lake so Bernie could have a swim and a splash. We'd recommend bringing walking boots and wellies if you're visiting

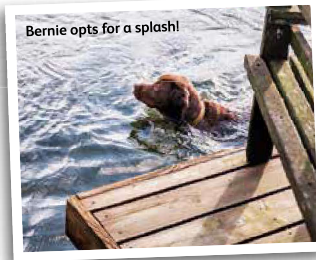


The lake is fenced off, so it's your choice!

when it's wet as there's lots of mud to get stuck into. We live near the beach so a lake so close was a great addition for us. Having two dogs that love to go for a swim it's great to see them splashing around somewhere safe and the fences made sure we could have them both off the lead without worrying.

If you want to relax yourself and watch them play there's a hanging swing – next time we'll bring a book and a flask of tea too.

We headed back up to the house where there is a heated dog shower available to use and towels to dry off the dogs. It's these small thoughtful features that meant we could really



Bernie opts for a splash!



The spacious garden



Remember your wellies!

Tried & tested **Wales**

relax, knowing there was a place to clean and dry them off after.

Just up the path there's also a fantastic paddock area and other guests had brought their dog agility equipment, jumps and cones which we used to put Bernie through his paces. Having safe spaces that we could let them off to run around was really important for us, especially being so far away from home. If you're nervous about letting your dog off the lead and want

to practise somewhere safe first, the paddock is fully protected and gives you a great space for training. It's great for puppies and dogs that might need some extra help with their recall.

When we came back the dogs settled down in their blankets on the leather sofas while we set up the log burner. For us the log burner



was the best part of the trip and was brilliant timing as our own was being installed while we were away. We loved starting the fire and warming up next to it in the evenings. The house felt really warm and cosy, ideal for a winter stay. It's the perfect place to get cosy with a good book or a film – just make sure to bring a DVD as there's no Netflix here.

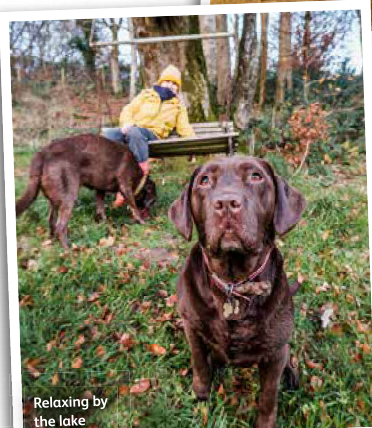
Before bed we felt safe to let the dogs out into the fully enclosed garden, and if you're visiting during the winter months when it's dark there is an outside light and torches provided so you can spot anything that might need picking up.

That night we looked at more information about our local surroundings and what was available. Mick has provided a huge amount of information on the website and there's plenty of walks nearby to enjoy depending on how far you want to

go. It would be easy to fill a whole week of activities.

We are so lucky in Wales that there are such a variety of places to visit with dogs. At Stallion Valley you're surrounded by fields and streams without a road in sight. There are plenty of stunning beaches nearby too which we are used to living in Barry Island. Depending on how long you visit there are lots of opportunities for exploring and if you need a map or some advice Mick is on hand to help.

Just down the road there is a beautiful walk where you can end up in a dog friendly pub which is always a winner. Bernie and Tilly love visiting the beach and next time we visit we'd love



It's intuitive...



to explore more of the local beaches which are just 25 minutes away.

We would really recommend this stay if you're looking for somewhere to get away with your dogs. You can bring up to three dogs or more, just get in contact with Mick and Julie first. They were extremely helpful in the run up to our stay and answered all the questions we had.

Dogs are charged at £25 per pet per week/break. A week at The Byre starts from £300 depending on when you visit which is a great price for the facilities, especially if you enjoy a stay with friends or family.

The Byre at Stallion Valley is great for switching off from the world and relaxing with your dogs without worrying and we would definitely visit again in the summer to see how vibrant it all looks in a new season.

Thank you for having us Mick and Julie, it was the perfect escape in the year when the one thing we all needed, but couldn't have, was a holiday.



The Ceredigion Coast Path

GREAT DOG FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES NEAR STALLION VALLEY Available outside of lockdown restrictions!

Gwarcefel Arms pub and restaurant, 5 mins walk

- The Gwarcefel Arms has a warm welcome to all and is just a 5 minutes walk away from the holiday cottages. Dogs are allowed in the bar on a lead and food is served in the bar on request.

The Coastal path, from 13 miles away

- The Ceredigion Coast Path provides access to the spectacular and varied coastline of Cardigan Bay on the west coast of Wales. It is an amazingly diverse landscape of sweeping sandy beaches, dunes, rock pools, waterfalls, rugged cliffs and pretty villages. The nearest walk to Stallion Valley Holiday Cottage is Llangrannog to Ynys Lochdyn, 3 miles circular and an extremely scenic cove section of walk.

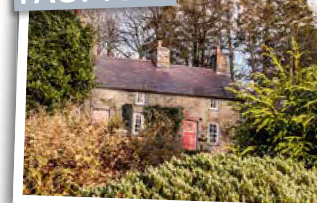
Beaches, from 14 miles away

- Every beach managed by the Ceredigion County Council provides areas where you can enjoy the company of your pet dog. You must, however, exercise control over your pet and ensure it does not stray from the designated areas. Cei Bach beach, is 15 miles away and the owner, Mick's, favourite beach. It is just north of New Quay. Very few facilities but you can walk for miles with the dogs when it opens up at low tide.



Cei Bach beach

FACT FILE



Stallion Valley Luxury Farmhouse holiday cottages

ADDRESS

Cwm March Farmhouse Cottages, Landysul, Ceredigion, SA44 4LR

CONTACT

01559 363444

PRICE A seven-day break starts from

£340 for four persons in The Byre

WEBSITE stallionvalley.com



Y Felin, flour mill St Dogmaels, 20 miles

- Y Felin is one of the last working water mills in Wales producing traditional stoneground flour. The mill is set in picturesque surroundings adjacent to the 12th century abbey of St Dogmaels.

The adjoining mill pond is home to a variety of waterfowl.

Pant Mawr Farmhouse Cheeses, 30 miles

- Pant Mawr Cheeses at their small traditional Welsh hill farm at Rosebush use locally produced cows and goats milk, to produce a range of mouth-watering, traditional, handmade cheeses. Samples available!