

● WITH fantastic views like this, Kensho, a brand new boutique hotel overlooking the azure waters of Ornos Bay in Mykonos, is sure to be a big hit this summer.

Take your pick from 25 designer rooms and ten suites, with air-con, complimentary WiFi, satellite TVs, espresso coffee machines, fully stocked minibars, fine linens, bathrobes, slippers and much more.

Many of Kensho's rooms and suites also come complete with private

plunge pools, Jacuzzis or hot tubs. If relaxation is what you seek, then expect to find the ultimate in pampered comfort at the Kensho Spa, pictured, where expert therapists provide world class treatments to invigorate the mind, body and soul

Treat your taste buds to gourmet dishes in the restaurant or pair your dinner with cocktails and outdoor views at the Pool Bar and Sunset Lounge. Rooms rates from £204 per night. See kenshomylkonos.com.



● HAMPTON by Hilton has opened its first property in Scotland. The 88-room hotel is in Glasgow city centre and it's perfect for visitors looking for a great place to stay in the city for a night out.

It is a short walk away from the King's Theatre, the Royal Concert Hall, Buchanan Street shopping and the SSE Hydro arena.

Brian McNelis, general manager, Hampton by Hilton Glasgow Central, said: "The hotel is situated in a

wonderful location and benefits from convenient transport links and a great selection of bars and restaurants are on our door step."

The hotel offers the brand's signature hot breakfast included with all rates, a fitness room and a 24-hour convenience hub with a selection of snacks and drinks. Guest rooms include a 32-inch HDTV and large work station.

See hampton.com or call them on 0141 428 4441.

HOT SPOT IT'S 24°C IN CRETE — a week at the 3★ Petra Village Apartments in Hersonissos is from £219pp with Jet2 Holidays. The price is based on self-catering with flights from Glasgow on May 26. More details at jet2holidays.com or call 0800 408 5594.

HOT SPOT IT'S 25°C IN TURKEY — seven nights at the 5★ Garden of Sun Hotel in Altinkum is from £265pp with On The Beach. The price is based on all-inclusive with flights from Edinburgh on May 25. See onthebeach.co.uk or 0871 474 3000.

Edited by
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3 pages of holidays

travel

Scotland's
most read
travel
supplement

CHEF DYNASTY DAZZLES AT LUXURIOUS CROSSBASKET CASTLE

Roux beauty

ALISON REID must be the most creative accountant who ever lived.

A woman whose amazing vision took her from crunching numbers to the crunch of gravel on the driveway leading to her own fairytale castle.

Along with hubby Steve Timoney, below, a former British Gas engineer who made his fortune developing Smart Meters, Alison has taken a tumbledown pile on the back road to High Blantyre and turned it into a breathtaking hotel-restaurant venue.

When they first clapped eyes on Crossbasket Castle, the lead had been stripped from its roof, water was pouring down its rotten staircases and the easy option would have been to bulldoze it for flats.

Yet even then, Alison could see something magical. Five years of non-stop graft and her dream has become stunning reality.

It took 18 months just to dry out the interior and the exterior was stripped of shabby cladding to reveal carvings dating back to the 15th century then sandblasted back to pristine blonde.

Stone by stone, room by room, the couple from Bothwell set about bringing Crossbasket back to life. This been a proper labour of love.

Their remarkable eye for detail shows itself in every inch of corning, every thread of carpet, every cushion and fluffy towel.

No interior designers were called in, no art experts given a blank cheque. Everything you see was either thought up by Alison or sourced by Steve — and everything about the finished work is five-star. My partner Sonia and I stayed in the Mackenzie room, one of the hotel's nine, each individually styled and named after a former owner; a sprawling, sumptuous yet cosy study in pale blue and gold, with oversized armchairs and a bathroom they could market as an instant cure for stress. On the next level — in every sense — stands The

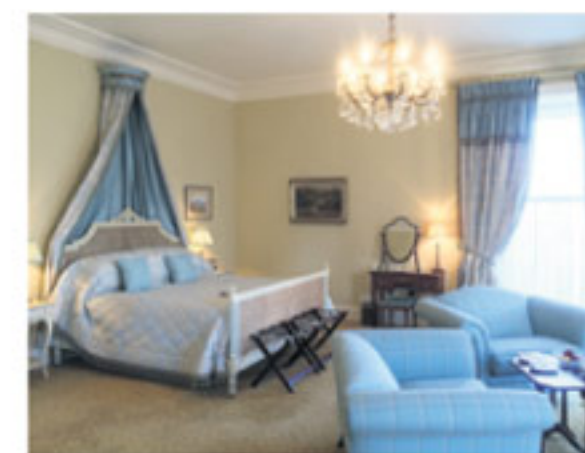


CORDON ROUX ...
Albert, Michael Jnr & Emily



GO: CROSSBASKET CASTLE

STAYING THERE: Double rooms starts from £250 per night. However you can book one for £199 B&B as an opening offer until June 30. There is also two nights for the price of one in a suite with breakfast from £395, again valid until the end of June. See crossbasketcastle.com or call them on 01698 829461.



Lindsay Tower Suite, a three-floored wonderland to make any bride-to-be feel like a princess; the storybook beginning for a big day climaxing in Crossbasket's dramatic ballroom, its ageless wooden beams and chandeliers telling tales of a thousand banquets down through history.

Or so you'd think. Because while it looks like this stunning centrepiece has also been rescued from dilapidation, it was actually built from scratch in a mediaeval style, more testament to the vision of the owners.

On the terrace between ballroom and low-lit hotel bar, you can sit by the window having afternoon tea and

watching white-flecked water tumble down the falls which provide the hotel's backdrop.

Crossbasket's restaurant is run by Albert Roux, his son Michel Jr and grand-daughter Emily. There's no background music, just peace to eat and drink and talk and laugh.

We went through the card on a seven-course taster menu, matched with a gorgeous selection of wines, and three hours flew by.

Throughout the experience, the staff were helpful yet unobtrusive. And knowledgeable? Wow. The waiter who brought the cheese trolley took us on an encyclopaedic taste-tour of Europe before we chose. By the time we tucked in, it felt like we knew

every farmer involved personally. And there, when it comes down to it, is the word that separates this wonderful addition to the landscape from other high-end establishments. Personal.

For although Crossbasket will — in my opinion at least — become THE upscale wedding venue, a celeb bolt-hole and the go-to backdrop for posh car launches, the local wifies who come in for a cuppa and a scone will be made to feel just as welcome.

And for all the gold-leaf around the ceilings, the old masters on the walls and the flourishes in the kitchen, that friendliness is the final, tiny detail that sells the place to me.
BILL LECKIE

CLUB TROPICANA: A week full-board at the 3★ Tropic Relax Hotel in Benidorm is from £296pp, leaving Edinburgh on June 4. See easyjet.com/holidays or call 020 3499 5232.

... **GARDEN OF EDEN:** Seven nights' self-catering at the 3★ Eden Apartments in Puerto Rico, Gran Canaria, is from £274pp, leaving Edinburgh on May 23. See jet2holidays.com or call 0800 408 5594.

... **GOOD GOLLY MISS HOLLY:** Holly Lodge, in Cockermouth, Cumbria, sleeps ten and costs from £806 for four nights from May 23. One dog welcome. See cottages.com or call 0345 498 6900.

... **PAR-FECT DAY:** A week half-board at the 5★ Porto Elounda Golf & Spa Resort in Elounda, Crete, is from £2,499 for a family of three including complimentary child care, one spa session per adult and private transfers. Flights from Glasgow on May 31. See sovereign.com or call 01293 765 003.

... **LAPA OF LUXURY:** Seven nights' self-catering at the 4★ Colina da Lapa Club Apartments in Carvoeiro in the Algarve is from £245pp, leaving Edinburgh on June 7. See lowcostholidays.com or call 0800 1116292.

LATES ... **DEVON MUST BE MISSING AN ANGEL:** Glenhaven in Woolacombe, Devon, (Home ID: 7179096) is a one-bedroom apartment available for a week from £575. See holidaylettings.co.uk or call 01865 237 135.

... **WE WILL ROCK YOU:** Three nights' room-only at the 3★ Ibiza Rocks Hotel in San Antonio Town is from £229pp, including flights from Prestwick on May 29. See suntravel.co.uk or call 0330 331 0451.

... **ANOTHER DAY IN PARADIS:** Le Petit Paradis 18th century farmhouse in Coulonges sur l'Autize, Deux Sèvres in Poitou-Charentes, France, has its own saltwater pool and spa. Sleeps six. A week is from £710. See sawdays.co.uk.

... **PARK LIFE:** A week all-inclusive at the 4★ Hotel Estival Park and Apartments in La Pineda, Costa Dorada, is from £589pp, leaving Glasgow on June 10. More details at firstchoice.co.uk.

... **ON THE RHODES AGAIN:** Seven nights' half-board at the 4★ Kresten Palace Hotel in Koskinou, Rhodes, is from £430pp, leaving Glasgow on June 1. See olympicholidays.com or call 020 8492 6792.

... **SEA BREEZE:** Seaham Hall in Durham has had a £3m refurb. An overnight costs from £195 for two, including breakfast. See seaham-hall.co.uk or call 0191 516 1400.