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GOING COASTAL

Sunset in Cornwall. Dorset – home to the best fish and chips, according to Tamsin Greig

jeaners and baggy trousers. I said, "Look, I've got the perfect jumper." But actually, the reason I wore it in the scene was because it's got quite a wide neck and I had to watch Deon Mackichan doing a burlesque dance to shock everybody, which meant that I could just lift the collar of the jumper over my face as though I was in shock. But it was actually so that I could just wet myself laughing.

Is there a song that reminds you of the place?

We play music on the way down there and Tom Petty does this beautiful song called Time to Move On. It has got this really beautiful beat of, "We're going now, we're on the way," for when we'd drive down and get the little chain ferry from Poole to Studland.

Your dress code for the destination?

You do have to bring all of your clothes, because you never know what the weather's going to be like. So, lots of layers. Obviously shorts because it could be sweltering, but then also all of your jumpers because it could be miserable. You always have to bring a raincoat and a swimming costume. And a wetsuit. Just wear those three all the time and you'll be fine.

As told to Vicky Jessop

Tamsin Greig is starring in The Deep Blue Sea at Theatre Royal Haymarket until June 12: trh.co.uk

CABIN CREW

Guests stay in fishermen's huts at Nusfjord



LET IT GO IN FROZEN NORWAY

Nusfjord, Lofoten

You're likely to be setting yourself up for disappointment if you wish for a holiday to blow your expectations out of the water.

Though my 15-year-old daughter and I risked high hopes for our trip to Nusfjord.

We anticipated being struck dumb and breathless by the vertiginous, snow-covered peaks erupting like towering shark's teeth from the Norwegian Sea; dining on incredible local cuisine; and letting our jaws gently drop in wonder as the Northern Lights fire up their psychedelic display across the night skies.

That might sound like a demanding wish list but it's par for the course at this historic fishing village resort way up beyond the Arctic Circle in northern Norway (Iceland is a relative southerner in comparison), tucked away in a tiny bay on the Lofoten archipelago, a labyrinth of mountainous islands.

We came in late winter when everything was draped in a sparkling quilt of snow. Think of the landscape surrounding Arendelle in

Frozen and you're getting close to the drama (Arctic Norway was a huge inspiration for the movie).

Nusfjord isn't like a hotel, or a resort really; it's a complete historic fishing village dating back to 425BC and possibly the best preserved in Norway. Besides the rorbu (those traditional red fishermen's cabins, now guest suites) scattered around a crooked harbour, many of the other buildings make up what pretty much counts as a museum; from the cod-liver oil factory to the blacksmith and sawmill, all are open to explore.

Back in 1947, a local captain by the name of Ragnvald Olsen used to row out to sea from the rorbu we stayed in. Yes, there's bona fide history ingrained into these wooden panels. Now it's a little more comfortable than in Ragnvald's day. Refurbished in a kind of shabby chic, mid-century fisherman style, it makes a snug yet spacious base to kick back in after a ramble along the coast to Nusfjord's miniature lighthouse (do go — you don't need a guide and the wild exposure and sea views are wonderful).

The weather is lord and master here, and a fishing trip to catch our cod supper was sadly cancelled. However, the sea kayaking alternative seemed like a decent plan B. After a thoroughly reassuring briefing by our guide Eduardo, we gently paddled out of the harbour, only to hear half a dozen guests besides themselves with excitement on the harbour wall, pointing and shouting, "Orcas! Orcas! Look, orcas!"

A rush of terror, followed by and even more intense flood of excitement, and we were off, paddling like frantic Attenboroughs to get a

peek of these beasts. And there they were, less than 100 metres away, a pod of half a dozen or so, their black fins thrusting out of the sea against an echoing backdrop of moody, jagged mountain peaks. We felt strangely secure (they're not interested in eating a little plastic boat, Eduardo reassured us) bobbing on the waves, snowflakes gently drifting down.

If that wasn't thrilling enough, Eduardo had brought along some fish to tempt other local creatures into a show. Before long, we had a pair of sea eagles swooping down between our kayaks. Expectations truly were blown clean out of that icy Norwegian Sea.

What do you do after a kick like that? In Nusfjord you head for a well-deserved sauna and a dip in the outdoor hot tub while basking in your Bear Grylls glow. If you're lucky, the Northern Lights will start to dance as you bathe.

We were also hungry for a dinner of champions after such exhilaration. Restaurant Karoline (one of three options) is famed for its Nordic fare. From meltingly tender Lofoten lamb to local duck breast with Nusfjord Toddy sauce, nothing on the menu had us in less than a state of semi-rapture.

Nusfjord is a wonderland whatever season. Come in summer and it's a hikers' paradise under the midnight sun, seabound activities are less foreboding and it even caters to golfers. It's a place you know will delight, but come with an open mind, go with the flow, and you're expectations might just turn into heart-stopping moments come true.

Nick Howells

Cabins from £190 for two, nusfjord.com

COUNTRY PUB OF THE WEEK

The Blue Ball Inn, Grantchester

One of those names that might have visiting Americans sniggering — google it for the slang — this pretty, petite pub is thought to actually take its name from a hot air balloon that landed opposite; sketches of it are not in short supply. The pub (1767) is older than the balloon (1783); whatever it was called for



the first 16 years or so has been lost to history. Across from the inn are views of fields that go on forever; inside, it is cosy with its worn wood and old maps on the walls. A free house, beers are local and cared about; prices are low: it is the sort of pub to come to with a dog, both of you exhausted from the walk, and settle in for an afternoon of idle chatter until the light goes, and the table leaves blinking into the darkness, wondering where the time went. David Ellis
57 Broadway, Grantchester, Cambridge, blueball grantchester.co.uk

kvd creative



TOP PICK

Newly opened in time for summer, Fowlescombe Farm in South Devon offers rural luxury with 10 reimagined stone barns sitting beside a Victorian farmhouse. Expect farm to fork dining and the chance to get hands-on at its organic farm. From £500, fowlescombe.com