

## WEEKEND PASS

### Mains Park Court

Mains of Taymouth Holiday Cottages, Kenmore, Perthshire (01887 830226, [www.taymouth.co.uk](http://www.taymouth.co.uk))

THERE are holiday cottages, and then there is the five-star experience that is Mains of Taymouth Holiday Cottages, on the shores of Loch Tay, where old farm buildings have been skilfully converted into luxury self-catering accommodation. Staying here, you will find yourself explaining vocabulary such as 'mezzanine' and 'sumptuous' to the children.

Original features from its days as the home farm for nearby Taymouth Castle are complemented by a conversion that has brought things bang up to date with everything from underfloor heating and saunas to hot tubs and satellite TV.

Our 'cottage', Mains Park Court, has three floors of accommodation, with five en suite bedrooms, a huge open-plan, split-level lounge, expansive kitchen and decking outside. And because the fixtures and fittings are built to last – the toasters are Dualit, the bathroom fittings are Roca – I'm proud to report that we managed not to break anything. It might be five-star, but it embraces children (and animals, as you can even bring your dog).

**Getting there** From the south, take the M90 to Perth, A9 to Ballinluig, then A827 to Aberfeldy – follow the signs for Kenmore and Loch Tay.

**Room service** We're talking boutique hotel standard with luxury finishes – it's all leather, silk and shearling. There are leather sleigh beds, digital tellies and DVD players, en suites with both showers and baths, and a balcony through french doors in the master bedroom, where you can have breakfast looking over the courtyard to the mountains beyond.

**What's the food like?** It may be called self-catering, but if it seems a shame to sully the glistening stainless-steel appliances and sparkling granite worktops in the kitchen, you could stroll along to the development's Courtyard brasserie and choose from the à la carte or bar menu.

If you do cook in the kitchen, there is



all the equipment you could possibly need to feed the nine-plus residents the cottage can accommodate. Out on the decking, there is a gas-fired barbecue and tables and chairs to enjoy al fresco eating.

**Out and about** With a nine-hole golf course and horse-riding on the estate, swings and play equipment for the kids, plus a private garden for each property with a sauna and hot tub, you might never leave the grounds. If you do, the nearby Crannog Centre offers a look at how our Iron Age ancestors lived. There's also a sandy beach at Kenmore and a choice of craft on which to set sail on the loch. Further afield, we visited the ancient yew tree at Fortingall, where the inscriptions on the graves in the churchyard give a clue to the devastation wrought on the

Highlands by the Clearances and two world wars, and picnicked at the amazing Falls of Dochart at Killin.

**Little extras** There is a TV in every room, L'Occitane products in the bathrooms, logs for the fire and nothing was too much trouble for owners Irena and Robin Menzies and their team. From readmitting us when we locked ourselves out, to showing us how to work the super-duper 42-inch flat-screen telly (doh!), or explaining how to operate the hot tub. The only thing missing was a labrador steaming in front of the log fire – you have to bring your own.

**The bottom line** Off-season weekend breaks (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) cost £1,600.

Janet Christie