



# STAY STYLISH

**Andrea Cowan** discovers the luxurious Pop-Up Hotel, which will be pitching its boutique tents all over the country this year, including in Somerset just in time for the Glastonbury Festival – be prepared for ultimate glamping

**W**e're used to hearing the term 'pop-up' these days – pop-up shops, pop up restaurants or pop-up exhibitions. But a couple of years ago Mark Sorrill, from Somerset, took it one stage further when he launched The Pop-Up Hotel to the British public.

Mark had spent the previous 12 years living and working in the Cayman Islands, developing some of the island's finest residential communities, concluding in a luxury, low impact resort which enabled guests to rediscover the natural landscape. "It opened my eyes to what really special hotels should be about: it's the experience that you can offer, not just a nice bed for the night," explains Mark. "People are looking for new and different experiences – something that they can tell their friends about but that can't be replicated – a holiday unlike any other."

Inspired by what he had created in the Caribbean, Mark returned to his roots in Somerset with his family, brimming with ideas. "As lovely as conventional boutique hotels are, they are effectively a series of boxes stacked on top of each other, connected by corridors, insulating the guests from their environment. I wanted to throw this whole concept into the air and see how it fell."

And so The Pop-Up Hotel was born, combining all the romance and fun of camping but with the service and amenities of a great boutique hotel.

"We have the most beautiful countryside in the UK, and some of the

most exciting events, so a transient hotel that would become part of the environment or event just seemed perfect," says Mark. "The rooms are situated apart from one another to give guests privacy and the opportunity to enjoy connecting with their surroundings, while just being a short walk to the common areas of the hotel such as the restaurant and spa."

Experience is the key word for The Pop-Up Hotel. "We are chameleon-like!" says Mark. "We tailor the hotel to get the most out of each location we visit. Guests really appreciate that their stay in the hotel is going to be completely unique – if they were to come and stay with us again in a different location, it would be a different experience. That makes it really special."

The Pop-Up Hotel was launched at Glastonbury Festival in 2011: a grown up affair with a chill-out bar serving drinks throughout the festival, valet parking, chauffeur service to the festival site, 24-hour security and room service – ensuring guests were well fed and rested each morning to cope with the day ahead.

Never staying in any one place for more than 28 days, The Pop-Up Hotel spent August in Cornwall in a seven acre field near Polzeath surfing beach, providing a family-friendly holiday with space for games of cricket and fire pits for toasting marshmallows. A one-off opportunity to stay at River Cottage in 2012 was a foodie affair, complete with cookery classes and guided tours round the farm for guests.

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**TRANSIENT LUXURY:** main picture, relax in the comfort of The Pop-Up Hotel at your favourite event or absorb the scenery in some of the most beautiful parts of the country

This page, below, the Glastonbury Superior Room is a 5m canvas bell tent with a private wooden deck; rooms are situated apart from each other to give guests privacy

The final pop-up of 2012 was at Goodwood Revival in September, a motor enthusiast's delight. Positioned in an exclusive site by the edge of the race track, staff were dressed in appropriate period racing clothing and the restaurant was decked out accordingly. "We had parking spaces next to the tents for guests to park their own vintage and classic cars," says Mark. "It was a real spectacle and great fun. We are all looking forward to another trip there this year, but with a few new twists."

Indeed, 2013 promises to be an action packed year for The Pop-Up Hotel. Starting with Glastonbury Festival, the hotel will provide all the atmosphere of staying under canvas at the festival but with the comfort and luxury of a really good boutique hotel – rock star style.

August will be spent visiting the Isle of Wight, providing a very special opportunity to stay within the beautiful parkland of Osborne House. Guests can enjoy exclusive access to the gardens and beach after visiting hours. As Queen Victoria herself announced: "it is impossible to imagine a prettier spot."

The hotel will also be servicing Cowes Week, providing a complimentary Land Rover shuttle service to the Cowes Chain Ferry which will take guests across the River Medina. Cowes has an eight day schedule for visitors to enjoy, including a fantastic line up of shoreside entertainment in addition to the sailing regatta.

"We are really excited as we have a few developments

planned," says Mark. Up until now we have offered canvas rooms, but there is no reason why we should be restricted to tents. We are sourcing some additional accommodation – equally glamorous and romantic, and easily transportable. We will be introducing some beautiful Airstreams into our festival offering, launching at Glastonbury this year. I'm also having a look at eco-pods."

The Pop-Up Hotel's adventures currently culminate at Goodwood Revival in September but Mark is not resting on his laurels. "We are hoping to expand abroad so that we can operate pop-up hotels all year round – it's a natural evolution of the concept. The whole principal behind the idea of The Pop-Up Hotel is to provide guests with a completely unique, memorable experience. To do that we are constantly striving to find the best locations and are following up requests from land owners all over the world. We are currently working with a company in Australia and should have news fairly soon about some Pop-Up Hotels there.

We are also looking into the Maldives and Caribbean, where the winter high season corresponds beautifully with England's off-peak months – and how amazing would it be to have a beach front Pop-Up Hotel that could only be reached on foot." ❖

For further information about The Pop-Up Hotel visit: [www.thepopuphotel.com](http://www.thepopuphotel.com)



## WIN!

This year, The Pop-Up Hotel is organising a special one night only event to celebrate the start of Glastonbury Festival.

On Tuesday 25 June, The Pop-Up Hotel will be hosting a magical, formal High Tea in the afternoon, followed by an evening of music, drinks and an exciting charity auction. Visitors will also have an opportunity to stay the night in the hotel, soaking up the atmosphere and the excitement just prior to the start of this year's festival.

For an exclusive opportunity to win two tickets for the day's events and to stay the night in a Glastonbury Superior Room (worth £400), just answer the following question correctly:

What is the new type of accommodation that The Pop-Up Hotel will be launching at Glastonbury Festival this year? a) Jetstreams, b) Airstreams or c) Gulfstreams

Email your answer with your name, address and telephone number to:

[competitions@westcountrymag.co.uk](mailto:competitions@westcountrymag.co.uk) with The Pop-Up Hotel Competition in the subject line. Closing date: Thursday 30 May.

Terms & conditions:

- The Glastonbury Superior Room is a 5m canvas Bell Tent with a private wooden deck. Fully furnished and full linens supplied.
- Competition open to UK residents only.
- Editor's decision is final.