

# Quick getaway

## KNOCK CASTLE HOTEL AND SPA, CRIEFF

**T**HE ideal quick getaway means different things for different people. For some, it requires the indulgence of top-to-toe massages and a lounge by the pool. Others demand a gastronomic delight, washed down with plenty of the good stuff. Then again, that may not cut it if a panorama of God's country isn't laid out before you. But sometimes all it takes is a comfy big bed – and the opportunity to lie in it.

Fortunately for my wife and I, sans toddler for once, Knock Castle Hotel And Spa in Crieff offered all of the above. From the moment we entered the beautiful old castle and were shown our sumptuous suite, everything about the place said relaxation.

The leisure complex, which looks out on the hotel's beautiful wooded gardens, features a heated pool, jacuzzi, sauna and steam room, along with a gym for the restless. If you've still got a knot or two after all that, or just prefer to let someone else do the work, the spa offers a full range of treatments ... and an Egg. A "relaxation capsule", the Egg gives a massage without the need for a masseur – 15 minutes of fully-clothed bliss.

The old market town of Crieff itself is well worth a meander, and Scotland's oldest distillery, Glenturret, is just minutes away. Hunting, shooting, fishing and golfing are all on your doorstep and the hotel staff can make the necessary arrangements. Sleeping, well, that we managed all by ourselves.

After taking a constitutional afternoon walk through the beautiful Strathearn countryside, getting slightly lost and dodging deer as we went, dinner in the rooftop Stag's View restaurant was a treat. The view was stupendous and the food not far behind. Fillet of lemon sole with celeriac, followed by delicious venison – sorry deer – and a wild berry pana cotta left me content, while the soup, risotto and particularly the cheese board had the boss ready for that lie-in.

Knock Castle offers much more than a

great night away – weddings, conferences, fine dining – but that was good enough for us.

*Dinner, bed and breakfast at Knock Castle starts from £139. Knock Castle Hotel and Spa, Drummond Terrace, Crieff, Perthshire PH7 4AN. Call 01764 650088 or visit [www.knockcastle.com](http://www.knockcastle.com)*

**JAMES FRIEL**

