



Perfect retreat with panoramic views



Tim Davey heads to the glorious St Just in Roseland peninsula in Cornwall for a holiday on a grand scale – in a glamorous home kitted out for 12, including a chef

Saturday night and my wife and myself are in deepest Cornwall on a weekend break. Ninety-nine times out of 100 we'd be heading for the nearest highly recommended pub or restaurant for our evening meal.

Then the doorbell of Moonrakers, our holiday home away from home, rings and there on the doorstep was Anne carrying a large wicker basket full to bursting with foodstuffs.

No need for us to go out to eat, you see. Anne Emmett was coming to do the cooking for us.

So, while we idled away the early evening watching the telly with a glass of vino, Anne was busy in the kitchen. Before too long the first course was brought to the dining table, all neatly prepared by Anne, right down to proper



FACTFILE

■ St Mawes Retreats has four properties in the resort – Moonrakers, Stargazers, Dreamcatchers and Shell-seekers, all with coastal views, and another, Sunseekers, in Fowey.

■ They can accommodate from two to 12 guests and offer short three- or four-night breaks as well as full weeks. Check out the website www.stmawesretreats.co.uk for details or call 08000 88 66 22.

■ For every booking in May and June, the person who books will receive an in-house spa treatment 60-minute complimentary massage by St Mawes Retreats' qualified beauty therapist.



napkins and silver napkin rings. Soon, we were tucking into a dill and smoked salmon terrine. It was delicious. But there was more. Porcini stuffed chicken breast wrapped in bacon (sourced from Anne's family farm) followed. While the third course was a delicious lemony apple Canterbury tart.

And the icing on the cake for this exceptional evening was the fact that we had no clearing up, or washing-up to do.

Anne and her culinary expertise is one of the many delightful holiday flourishes which St Mawes Retreats, owners of Moonrakers, can offer those who stay at their properties.

St Mawes is one of those perfectly proportioned Cornish coastal gems. There's a beach, a working harbour, coastal paths, plenty of places to eat and drink, bags of character and even a fortress, the latter courtesy of Henry VIII and still in rather good nick.

Moonrakers, meanwhile, was everything a grand holiday house should be. It sleeps 12, and light floods in thanks to magnificent panoramic views to the coast. There's a games den with pool table, a Wii, flat-screen TV and so forth, while in the garden there's a large trampoline, goal posts for football and full-size table tennis.

St Mawes is about a five-minute stroll down the hill to the harbour. Though if you headed left instead of right out of the property you would come first to the highly rated Lamorran Gardens in Upper Castle Road.

Heading further afield, aside from our visit to Falmouth, we took a tour around the fortress. It's maintained by English Heritage and offers some spectacular vistas from its fortified ground and battlements.

There are a number of ferry services, some quite novel ones, plying their trade in these waters, too, so it's worth checking them, especially those which head up-river for specialist cruises to places such as Trellisick Gardens, a National Trust property.

This is the charming Roseland Peninsula, and St Mawes falls within the parish of St Just in Roseland. The weather obliged with some spring sunshine so we picked up the coastal path not far from Moonrakers. The route was a delight, offering the chance to stop every so often at some "secret" sandy coves.

But the best bit was yet to come. As we headed into St Just, our walk out of the village took us past the parish church there.

I doubt there is another place of worship in the country which can match the glorious location of this one, sitting, as it does, at the head of a tranquil picturesque creek.

Now, after chef Anne's Saturday night culinary treat, the Sunday of our stay brought with it the usual dilemma about where to go for a traditional Sunday lunch.

Ingrid, who helps look after the St Mawes Retreats properties, suggested our nearest "local", The Victory Inn. It was a very good call. And at £6.96 was also ludicrously good value.

All too soon Monday morning rolled around and our short break drew to a close. It was hard to tear ourselves away because we'd both become deeply smitten with Moonrakers... and then there was also the not insubstantial matter of deciding what we were going to buy and cook for dinner back home that night.