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TRIPADVISOR HONOURS TOP 10 EUROPEAN CASTLE HOTELS

UK Rules for Regal Relaxation

London – July 3, 2008 – TripAdvisor®, the world's largest travel community, today announced the top 10 castle hotels in Europe, according to traveller popularity and TripAdvisor editors.

1. Good Knight's Stay: Glin Castle, Glin, Ireland – Average Nightly Rate: £246

Residence to Desmond FitzGerald, Knight of Glin, visitors can wander through the magnificent gardens replete with vegetables and fresh fruit that surround the majestic Georgian Glin Castle. As one TripAdvisor traveller said, "We checked out feeling like we had experienced a taste of what the FitzGerald family must have felt like for hundreds of years in their lovely castle by the River Shannon."

2. Stuart Spectacle: Castle Stuart, Inverness, Scotland – Average Nightly Rate: £308

Travellers can go back in time in the Castle Stuart, built by James Stuart in 1625, and stay in the west tower, that features particularly remarkable views of the countryside. As one TripAdvisor traveller said, "The castle is exactly what it claims to be with turret rooms, a great hall, spiral staircases, secret doors and so on."

3. Oh, Henry: Thornbury Castle, Thornbury, England – Average Nightly Rate: £197

Guests can rest their heads on Anne Boleyn's pillow (or at least in the same spot), by spending a night in the Duke's bedchamber at the stunning Thornbury Castle. As one TripAdvisor traveller said, "Stayed for one night in the Henry VIII room, which my wife declared was one of the best rooms she had ever stayed in."

4. Grand Tours: Domaine de la Tortiniere, Tours, France – Average Nightly Rate: £155

Visitors can enjoy the sitting room of La Tortiniere, adorned with colourful antique furniture, where the town of Tours was surrendered to the Germans during the 1870 war. As one TripAdvisor member said, "The chateau, facilities and grounds are absolutely beautiful with many beautiful walks."

5. Fit for a Queen: Borthwick Castle, Edinburgh, Scotland – Average Nightly Rate:

£137

Once a residence of Mary Queen of Scots, travellers can lounge in her former bedchamber, that showcases books and pictures of the Queen. As one TripAdvisor traveller said, “The interiors of the castle have been kept very 'old worldly,' which adds to the authenticity of the building. The history is fascinating and a tour of the castle after a superb candlelit dinner is provided and recommended.”

6. Charles was in Charge: Chateau de Bagnols, Lyon, France – Average Nightly Rate £669

Gaze at the royal coat of arms above the amazing fireplace in the Chateau de Bagnols, honoring Charles VIII’s visit to this Beaujolais-region castle. According to one TripAdvisor member, “Set in the heart of Beaujolais countryside this ancient castle provides everything a seasoned traveller could hope for, stunning rooms, helpful staff, modern amenities and a top-class restaurant.”

7. Chianti Classic: Castelletto di Montebenichi, Bucine, Italy – Average Nightly Rate: £121

Located in the heart of Chianti, Castelletto di Montebenichi offers medieval accommodation situated among olive groves, vineyards and a surreal Tuscan landscape. As one TripAdvisor traveller said, “This is an authentic castle, with remarkable public rooms (library, living room, breakfast terrace) but comfortable, as well.”

8. Cong Charm: Ashford Castle, Cong, Ireland – Average Nightly Rate £264

Dating back to the 13th century and surrounded by lush forests, the Ashford Castle is renowned for its stunning grounds, with romantic gardens and striking views over the Lough Corrib Lake. One TripAdvisor traveller said, “From the gates that welcome you to the property to the castle itself, it is a magical experience.”

9. King of the Hills: Parador de Jaen, Jaen, Spain - Average Nightly Rate £103

Overlooking the city of Jaen and featuring breathtaking views of the Sierra Morena hills and mountains of the Sierra Nevada, this 13th century Arabic-style fortress was once captured and occupied by Ferdinand III. As one TripAdvisor traveller said, “The location and the views were amazing; a truly unique experience to stay in a castle.”

10. Sibling Rivalry: Hotel Castle Liebenstein, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany – Average Nightly Rate: £87

As the highest castle in the Middle Rhine, Castle Liebenstein uniquely sits across from Castle Sterrenberg; two castles renowned as the “enemy brothers” and divided by a large stone wall. One TripAdvisor member said, “You can eat inside with the suits of armour in the eating area, or outside with a view of the Rhine.”

“We all want to be treated like royalty sometimes but at these grand properties, you’ll truly feel like royalty,” said Michele Perry, vice president of global communications for TripAdvisor.

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*Source: comScore Media Metrix, Digital Calculator Report, July 2007

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