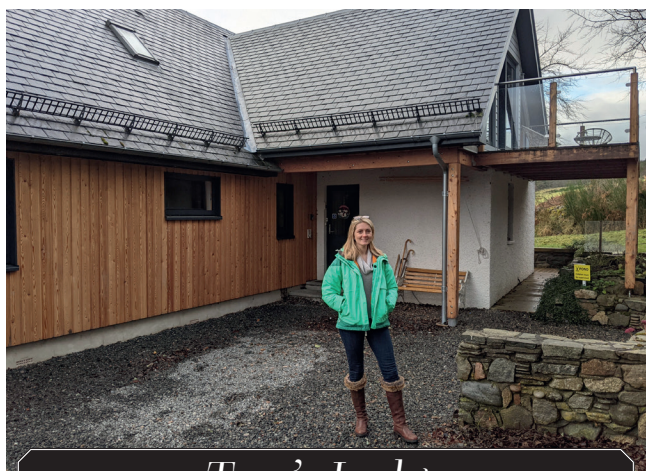


# A home away from home

From eco-friendly to dog and family-friendly, these four spectacular self-catering properties are bound to surprise and delight



*Tom's Lodge*

**BY MARIANNE & ALEX WATTERS FROM EDINBURGH**  
Tom's Lodge is a luxury 'eco-house', situated in the heart of the Cairngorms. The lodge can sleep 8-10 and would provide plenty of space for a fun-filled family get-together, though we thoroughly enjoyed it as a couple.

We visited during a storm and were especially grateful for the impressive log burner which effectively provides heat to the whole building. The open-plan living area also features stunning glass windows which stretch across the length of the room, offering sprawling views of the Cairngorms. As the snow descended, we marvelled at the changing landscape from the comfort of the sofa. Despite the weather, the lodge's hot tub provided another wonderful spot from which to relax and take in the views.

Everything has been thought of, with a setup which suits relaxing, hosting or adventuring. In keeping with high standards across the property, the modern kitchen is very well appointed. Kids (or adults) could happily hide away in the upstairs snug with movies and games. A substantial heated utility room and separate bike shed mean you are covered for outdoor activities too. As for bedrooms, we were spoiled for choice. All bedrooms are stylish and inviting with sumptuous furnishings. Just a short drive from Aviemore, you're well placed to enjoy a range of activities. Our visit to the Cairngorm Reindeer Centre was a highlight, and we'd love to come back during the snowsports season. Tom's Lodge is your perfect base.



*Mansley Luxury Apartments*

**BY ELINOR & BETH MITCHELL FROM EDINBURGH & INVERNESS**

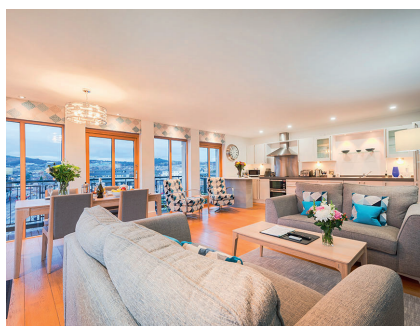
Sometimes the word 'luxury' doesn't match expectation but I'm delighted to report that the word definitely befits the standard of accommodation at the Mansley Apartments. We stayed in one of the two-bedroom apartments which was very spacious and well equipped. Highlights included the comfy beds, the quality kitchen appliances, and the attention to detail in terms of having beautiful flowers, fresh ground coffee, quality snacks (including vegan sweets which delighted my daughter) and 'green' toiletries.

The wall-length picture window with views over the River Ness was a real delight. What could be nicer than sitting in a leather armchair watching the sun go down over the hills across the water? These apartments are in the city centre, within easy reach of shops, Eden Court, Inverness Castle and a huge range of bars/restaurants. We went to the Black Isle Bar for lunch and enjoyed some of the local Black Isle beer along with amazing hand-made pizzas.

Sunday was spent walking the River Ness and Caledonian Canal circuit – a flat but picturesque 12km walk which was so easy to access from the apartment's front door. There is so much to do in Inverness, and having such a great place to come back to at the end of a busy day was such a treat. Add to that very friendly customer service and you have a great place to stay. And did I mention the secure underground car park? I'm planning my next visit already.



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