



PICASSO CAVIAR AND MOJITOS

AUTHOR

Posted by **Caroline Phillips** on
November 11, 2013 in **News**

TAGS

Tagged in **Lake District** and **Samling Hotel**

SHARING

Like 0

+1 Recommend this

Tweet 0

Share 1

That's The Samling. Now it's won a Michelin star and has £8000 bottles of 1989 Petrus on the wine list. Oh and Posh and Becks once stayed there. Is this really the Lake District?



Sometimes you find a place so good you don't want to tell people about it.

The Samling is one such. But its restaurant has just won a Michelin star, so it's too late to keep schtum.... The hotel can accommodate 24 lucky guests – in rooms and six cottages – in a gabled 1780s house in Windermere, the Lake District. All set on a steep hill and in 67 acres of gardens with giant genera, lavender and hemp. You may inadvertently walk past 'reception' – simply a bureau desk in the hall – but soon enough you'll encounter the young, smiley, ever-solicitous staff. They're doing great things. Since changing hands in 2011, The Samling has been snapping up awards. ('Best boutique dining hotel in the world' type monikers.)

Tenerife

from
£47

one way inc. taxes
BOOK NOW

Jet2.com
Friendly low fares

The thirtysomething crack team of kitchen folk come from Noma to the Fat Duck plus rising-as-fast-as-a-souffle star chef Ian Swainson's from L'Ortolan. They whip up canapés of rabbit confit in nasturtium flower to a pudding of dry ice-‘steaming’ teapot of mojito sorbet with mint bubbles. It's sublime Heston-meets-The- Ledbury type food, with liberal smatterings of Ostericsa caviar and summer truffles. (And a bargain with dinner, B&B from £230 for two or £50pp just for the 5-course dinner, but best stay the night to secure a table.) There's also a wine list – 400 and growing - for serious noses.

The hotel décor is being spruced up – a refurb is afoot, including dining area extension and wine tasting room. Meanwhile, sigh, you have to settle for original Dali, Picasso and Miro lithographs and sketches on its walls. Ask for ‘Methera’, a suite with picture windows with splendiferous views of Lake Windermere, the marina with bobbing boats and vast painterly sky. (Rooms are named after how shepherds count sheep. Reach ‘20’ if you're a shepherd and you have to put a pebble in your pocket.) Book the al fresco hot tub in the garden for a private soak while drinking bubbly and gazing at the lake. Go for rambles on majestic, towering hills among waterfalls then slaver yourself in seaweed and sage Ren goodies. Above all, enjoy what's fast becoming a hot gastro area - L'Enclume is down the road. And all a mere three hours by train from London. No wonder the publisher and his wife who used to stay here liked it so much that they bought it.

Caroline Phillips (www.carolinephillips.net) is an award-winning journalist who has written for the Sunday Times, The Times, Observer, Guardian, Independent, Mail on Sunday, Daily Mail and Evening Standard. Additionally she has been published in a variety of magazines, from Tatler to Harpers Bazaar and Vanity Fair. She is a consultant for Globalista – website for the discerning traveller – and contributing editor of Country & Town House. She has been a contributing editor of Spear's and co-edited its Spa Guide.

The Samling, Ambleside Road, Windermere, Cumbria, LA23 1LR. Tel: +44 (0)1539 431922. www.thesamlinghotel.co.uk.