

# Check in to an old haunt

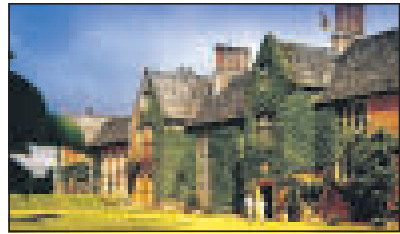
## LITTLECOTE HOUSE

### Hungerford, Berkshire

This restored Tudor mansion, below, where Henry VIII wooed Jane Seymour, is now a Warner Leisure Hotel (0800 138 2633/warnerleisurehotels.co.uk) that plays host to fun-themed weekends. However, its past is wreathed in darkness.

The last of the original family owners "Wild" William Darrell is said to have had an affair with the wife of a neighbour who subsequently fell pregnant.

Legend has it a midwife, Mother Barnes, was brought to the house and told to save the woman. When she



failed, Darrell threw the newborn on to the fire.

Today guests can stay in one of the house's "historic" rooms, with period furniture and four-posters, or in more contemporary accommodation in the annexe.

Over Hallowe'en weekend, TV mediums Jayne Wallace and the Psychic Sisters will be on hand to reveal Littlecote's other ghouls.

● *Three-night Hallowe'en Experience break from £768 (two sharing), half board. Price includes classes in tarot cards, psychometry, pendulums and aura readings plus a late-night ghost walk. For bookings October 29. Visit West Berkshire: 01635 30267/ www.visitwestberkshire.org.uk*

## DOVER CASTLE

### Dover, Kent

This medieval stronghold which sits in a spectacular position on the white cliffs is believed to be home to at least nine ghosts.

English Heritage (0870 333 1187/english-heritage.org.uk) has two holiday cottages in the grounds; the four-storey Georgian Sergeant Major's House and Peverell's Tower, a 13th-century keep.

Inmates of the past would have been less comfy than those now

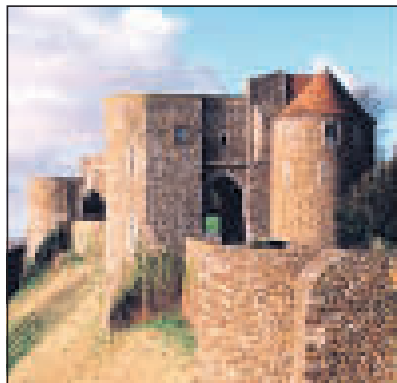
**With Hallowe'en just a week away, why not get in the mood and book a stay in a spooky room, says JAMES ELLIS**



**SPOOKY NIGHTS: 'Spine-chilling' Chillingham Castle, the 12th-century fortress in wild Northumberland where ghosts are reported to roam free**

staying in the sympathetic conversion. Whereas there are now exposed floorboards, white-painted period furniture and a well-equipped country-style kitchen, the tower was once a jail and indeed one of the beams bears graffiti from a former prisoner that reads "Pierre Avsudre 1757".

One of the nine ghosts is said to be



**GHOST STORY: Peverell's Tower above the white cliffs of Dover**

the Headless Drummer Boy who roams the battlements.

● *Three nights in Peverell's Tower from £469 (two sharing), self-catering. Price includes a welcome hamper. Bookings for November 1. Dover, Deal and Sandwich Tourism: 01304 205108/whitecliffscountry.org.uk*

## MACDONALD PITTODRIE HOUSE

### Inverurie, Aberdeenshire

Once a home of Robert the Bruce, Macdonald Pittodrie House (01467 681744/macdonaldhotels.co.uk/pittodrie) has been converted into a hotel with 27 rooms, some of which feature original fireplaces, huge beds and richly patterned curtains and furnishings.

This sanctuary may be shattered by the 14th-century house's resident spooks. One of the most common apparitions is that of a maid who fell down a staircase to her death.

According to staff, her screams can be heard every October 30. The

hotel's library is said to be haunted by a male spirit while some people even claim to have seen a ghostly horse and carriage racing down the drive.

● *One night's stay from £121 (two sharing), B&B. Aberdeen City & Shire Tourism: 01224 288828/aberdeen-grampian.com*

## THE FEATHERS, Ludlow, Shropshire

With its ornate timber frontage in the heart of medieval Ludlow, The Feathers (01584 875261/www.fihotels.com) sets its own spooky scene worthy of a Hammer Horror film.

The hotel's 40 rooms (think large four-posters and white walls with flashes of floral soft furnishings) almost match the number of ghosts claimed to have been seen.

Guests have reported visions of a scantily clad female in the car park and a Victorian gentleman walking his dog through the walls between rooms 232 and 233.

Room 211 is the pick of the bunch though. A jealous ghost apparently

## CHILLINGHAM CASTLE

### Alnwick, Northumberland

Chillingham Castle, left (01668 215 359/www.chillingham-castle.com) may be the place where the term "spine-chilling" originated. Ghost sightings in this 12th-century fortress near Northumberland's wild coast are plentiful. Guests can stay in self-catering apartments, some of which have four-poster beds, antique furniture and the kind of portraits where the subject's eyes seem to follow you around the room.

There are plenty of legends to investigate, including the ghost of former owner Lady Mary Berkeley who still wanders the corridors looking for her husband who absconded with her sister.

Other ghouls include the "Blue Boy", two men whose voices can be heard in the library and the spirits of eight people hanged, drawn and quartered in the grounds. The castle's organised ghost tours are said to be the most frightening in the country.

● *One night's stay from £100 (two sharing), self-catering.*

doesn't take kindly to women, with one guest claiming she was pulled out of bed by her hair.

The hotel has an Eerie Evening on October 30, with two-course meal, psychic readings and a late-night ghost hunt and paranormal investigation.

● *Eerie Evening stay from £198 (two sharing), B&B; includes themed events. Visit Shropshire: 01584 875053/shropshiretourism.co.uk*



**SPIRIT WORLD: Apparitions are common at The Feathers in Ludlow**

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