



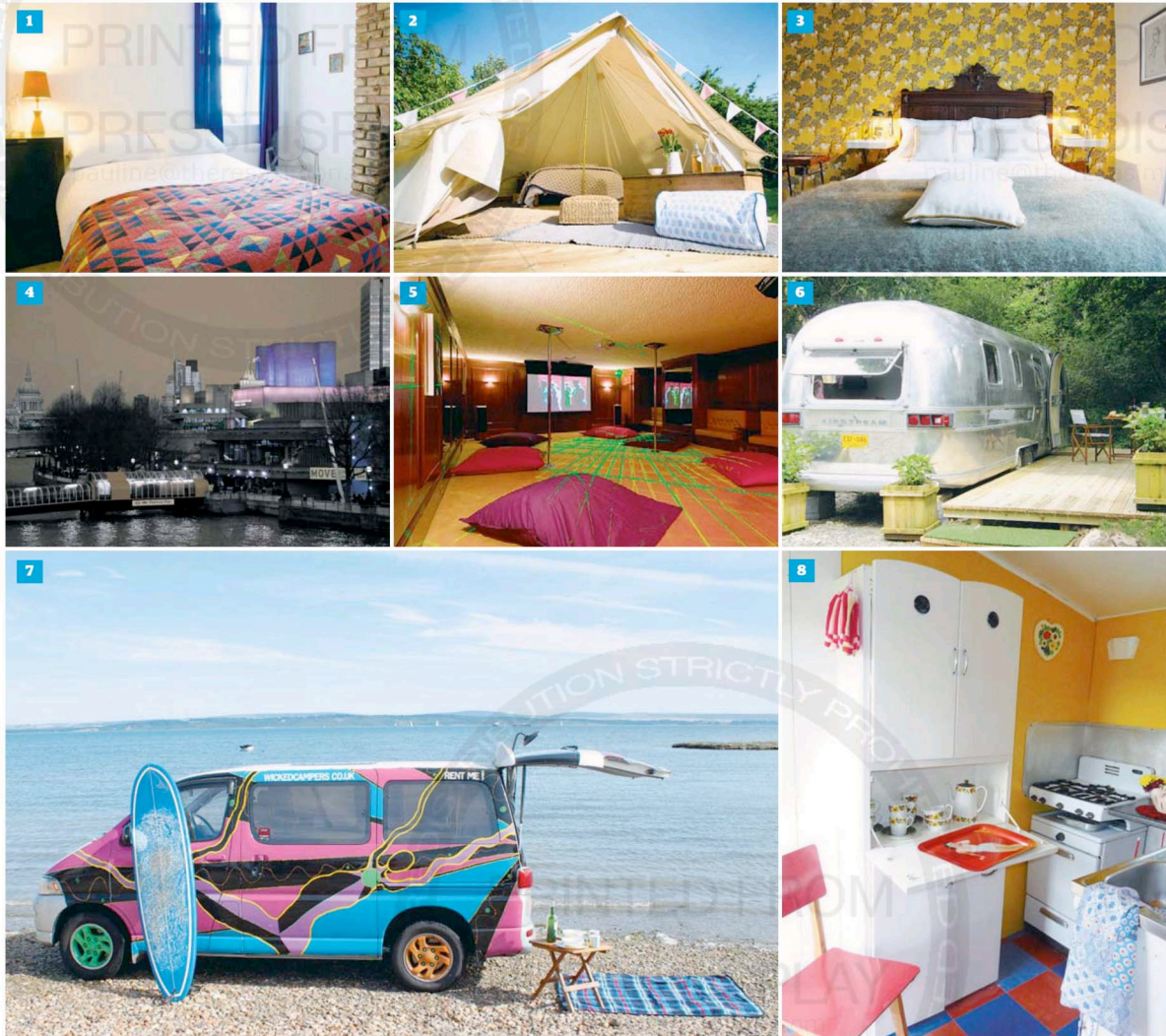
Cool

Britannia

From film festivals
to art breaks and hot hotels
to the reinvention
of canal boating in a
22-page special

1-2 A PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNE JATCHELOR

Next Saturday » Eccentric Britain The third of our UK specials delves into our oddball side. There'll be crop circles and conspiracy theories, vintage cycling and our mythical past



If a Travelodge doesn't quite do it ...

Boats on top of buildings, rock'n'roll inns, and pop-up camps beside the Cornish surf ... We pick eight new and stylish places to stay in the UK

1 Russells of Clapton London

This has to be the most surprising location for a boutique hotel we have ever heard of. Clapton is a rather deprived corner of the capital, so a stylish bolthole, perfect for the ex-manager of electronic indie band Hot Chip no less, and frequented by models and musicians, has come as something of a shocker. Perhaps it shouldn't. Chatsworth Road, where this five-room pad is located, is fast turning into the new Dalston, full of hipsters, organic cafes and home to a weekly farmers' market. It's also 10-15 minutes from Broadway Market and London Fields, five from Hackney Marshes, 30-ish from Liverpool Street. Rooms are white, with Welsh blankets, framed artworks and quirky glass lamps. ● 07976 669906, russellofclapton.com, rooms from £70-105 a night

2 The Pop-Up Hotel Cornwall and various locations

Britain's first "transient hotel" offers a collection of stylish tents which will be "popping up" at festivals, secluded country locations and private beaches across the UK. Choose from a classic bell tent or one of the "suites", which are inspired by luxury safari tents and offer covered front decks, king-size beds and ensuite bathrooms. The service is hotel-spec, with concierge, valet parking, chauffeur service, restaurant and bar. The hotel has just set up camp at Trevanger Farm in St Minver in Cornwall, perfect for a spot of late-summer sun and surf, and will be there until 31 August. In September it will up sticks, leaving no trace behind, and move onto its next location, rumoured to be a spectacular country estate in Dartmoor.

● From £115 a night; book through Canopy and Stars, 01275 395447, canopyandstars.co.uk

3 The Wheatsheaf Inn Northleach, Gloucestershire

Don't be fooled by the mellow stone exterior of this traditional Cotswolds coaching inn, this place has some

serious rock'n'roll credentials. Musicians from Steve Winwood to members of the Sex Pistols have stayed here, as well as guests at Kate Moss's recent nuptials. Come for the low-key luxury of the bedrooms - with their Bang & Olufsen televisions, posh toiletries and fine bedlinen - the real ales in the cosy bar, and the all-day weekend brunch, with its Bloody Mary sardines and rock oysters, washed down with Bucks Fizz. ● Doubles from £120 a night; 01451 860244, cotswoldswheatsheaf.com

4 A Room for London Southbank Centre

The latest offering from Alain de Botton's Living Architecture project of architect-designed self-catering properties is the most audacious yet: a "boat" on the roof of the Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall. Designed by David Kohn Architects and artist Fiona Banner, the temporary one-bedroom installation will open in January 2012 and will have a nautical theme, with balconies, a "bridge", and spectacular views of London.

● Booking opens on 8 September, with rates from £120 a night; living-architecture.co.uk

5 Heron Hall Dorking, Surrey

The last word in decadence, this eight-bedroom manor house comes with a dedicated party room (complete with dancing poles, strobe lighting and large cinema screen), plus a hot tub, sauna, gym and tennis courts for working off the hangover. It's set in five acres of private parkland, so you won't disturb the neighbours.

● Sleeps 16, £1,075 for a weekend or £3,995 a week; holidaylettings.co.uk/132262

6 Ty Cefn Tregib Airstream Carmarthenshire

Or how about a vintage 1976 American Airstream in a quiet corner of the Brecon Beacons national park? It sleeps two and has a comfy lounge area kitted out in 1970s style, plus DVD, iPod dock, shower, kitchen and king-size double bed. Step outside and the wilds of Wales are at your feet.

● A three-night weekend break costs from £210; 01558 823942, tregib.co.uk

7 Wicked Campers Edinburgh

The campervan company that offers crazily decorated vans all over the

world has opened a new depot in Edinburgh. Wicked Campers' colourful vehicles come fully equipped with a bed, additional tent, sink, gas stove, coolbox and CD player/iPod connection, so all you have to do is turn up and hit the road. You could head for the wide sandy beaches of East Lothian, or north for a Highland adventure.

● Seven days' hire from Edinburgh starts from £58pp, based on five sharing a multi-seater campervan; 0808 234 8461, wickedcampers.co.uk

8 1950s caravan Isle of Wight

Fans of all things retro will love Mabel, Vintage Vacations' 1950s caravan, which is lovingly restored, and furnished with crocheted throws, Formica chairs and 1950s kitchen units. Mabel's home for the summer is the delightful Brightstone Holiday Park in the south-west of the island, which dates from the 1930s and oozes period charm, with its simple wooden chalets and sea views. And there's still availability for August and September.

● Sleeps two adults and two children; from £175 for a two-night short break, 07802 758113, vintagevacations.co.uk Gemma Bowes and Joanne O'Connor