



Back to nature: The best outdoor wellness experiences this summer

Ready to swap screen time for green time? This summer, it's all about stepping outside, embracing nature's healing power, and treating body and mind to a well-deserved reboot. Whether it's diving into chilly lakes, soaking up the serenity of a forest sauna, or glamping like royalty, we've got the ultimate guide to outdoor wellness experiences that are so zen, even stress will take a holiday. From forest bathing to wild swimming, here are our ten top outdoor wellness spots.

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1. Wild swimming: Dive into nature's coolest pool party

Best for: Nature lovers, thrill-seekers, and anyone who's not afraid of a little cold water

Jumping into a sparkling lake or a pristine river? It's not just a workout, it's a full-on wellness experience, and it's absolutely glorious. [The Wild Swimming Co.](#) runs lifeguard-led retreats across some of Britain's most stunning spots, from Snowdonia's (Eryri's) misty lakes to the rolling hills of the Lake District. Whether first-timer or seasoned water warrior, they've got everything covered – think expert coaching, breathwork techniques to conquer the cold, and a post-swim fireside warm-up. In Scotland, take the plunge in [wild swimming spots](#) like Loch Morlich, surrounded by the Cairngorm mountains, Loch Ard in the Trossachs, or the fairy-tale setting of Fairy Pools on the Isle of Skye. For something more urban, Portobello Beach near Edinburgh offers a bracing dip just a short hop from the city.

2. Sherwood Forest Treetop Sauna: Sweating it out, Robin Hood style

Best for: Anyone who loves a good sauna (and a side of forest magic)

It's time to leave troubles behind and climb to new heights – literally. [Aqua Sana's](#) Treetop Sauna in Sherwood Forest is pure wellness magic. Guests can sweat it out among the treetops with sweeping views of the enchanting forest below. This isn't just a relaxation session, it's a woodland wellness adventure. After a soothing sauna session, visitors can dip in the outdoor thermal pool for a refreshing cooldown. With nature's grandeur and a sauna above the trees, the legendary Robin Hood might even be tempted to trade in his bow and arrow for a towel and robe.

3. Wilderness Festival, Oxford: Wellness, arts and outright fun

Best for: Festival-goers who want to balance yoga with a dose of hedonism

Who says wellness can't include a bit of music, arts, and the occasional cocktail? At [Wilderness Festival](#), visitors will find a good mix of zen and boho style. Held in Cornbury Park in the heart of the Oxfordshire countryside, this artsy, eco-conscious festival offers everything from sunrise yoga and forest bathing to lake swims and mindful walks. But don't worry, there's still time to rock out to live music, sip some cocktails by the fire, or indulge in a farm-to-table meal. It's all about balance. Whether visitors are blissed out in a yoga session or dancing barefoot to a live band, Wilderness is wellness with a good dose of fun thrown into the mix.

4. Glamping at The Quiet Site, Ullswater, Lake District: Sleep under the stars (without the muddy tent)

Best for: Those who want to experience nature without sacrificing comfort

For those who believe 'camping' involves dragging a stiff sleeping bag through a muddy field, think again. Welcome to glamping at [The Quiet Site](#), where the only thing rough about the stay will be the gentle breeze on one's face (not a rough night in a tent). Nestled in the idyllic Ullswater Valley, visitors can expect eco-friendly pods, glamping cabins – and Hobbit Holes with all the mod cons, from Wi-Fi to en-suite toilets. It's a dream retreat: soak in the sweeping Lake District views, unwind by the campfire, and fall asleep to the sounds of nature without experiencing night-time encounters with 'rustic' amenities.

5. Forest bathing with Forestry England: Soak up some serious nature vibes

Best for: Anyone who could use a moment of peace (most of us)

Time to swap the Wi-Fi connection for a connection with the forest. Forest bathing, or shinrin-yoku, is nature's version of a full-body reset. [Forestry England](#) offers guided forest bathing experiences where participants can unplug from the digital world and simply immerse themselves in the calming embrace of the woods. Practice mindfulness, deep breathing, and let the natural world take over for the moment. Top locations include [Wendover Woods](#) in the Chiltern Hills, the [Forest of Dean](#), and [High Lodge](#) in Thetford Forest in Suffolk, where forest bathing is enhanced with sound therapy using crystal bowls and gongs. The experiences aims to make participants leave feeling more centred, calm – and possibly even capable of dealing with their inbox upon their return to civilisation.

6. Roots and Seeds Kitchen Garden Café, Cirencester: Eat greens in style

Best for: Foodies who want to eat wellness on a plate

What could be better than a wholesome meal surrounded by beautiful gardens? Roots and Seeds Kitchen Garden Café in Cirencester delivers just that. This farm-to-fork haven serves up organic, locally sourced dishes in a beautiful garden setting. After a wander through the herb-filled garden or a stroll around the local countryside, sit down to a fresh, nutritious meal that will make diners feel like they've been nourished straight from the earth. Whether it's a hearty salad, a grain bowl, or just a simple veggie dish, everything here is good for the soul.

7. Dovecote Barns York, Kelfield: A quirky country retreat with charm

Best for: Anyone who wants peace, quiet, and a bit of country charm

Need a change of scenery? [Dovecote Barns](#) in the village of Kelfield, Yorkshire, is like stepping into a cosy countryside storybook. These lovingly restored eco barns give guests a peaceful place to unwind, surrounded by nature's best assets: fields, quiet corners, and nothing but time to chill. There's also the added bonus of a private garden and barbecue, and the option of booking a private fine-dining experience with a local Michelin star trained chef. Wake up to birdsong and sip coffee overlooking open fields. Even four-legged friends are welcome. With York's historic gems just a short drive away, this is the sweet spot between rural charm and city convenience.

8. Halen Môn Anglesey Sea Salt, Brynsiencyn: Bathing in the goodness of the sea

Best for: Wellness lovers who like relaxing with a pinch of salt (literally)

It's salty, it's soothing, and it's good for the skin. At [Halen Môn](#), on the island of Anglesey, guests can experience the benefits of locally harvested sea salt and seaweed in their rejuvenating sea salt baths. Hop into a recycled whiskey barrel and enjoy a wellness experience packed with minerals that detoxify and nourish the skin, all while enjoying scenic views of the Menai Strait. Feeling extra zen? Don't forget to check out the on-site shop and stock up on Welsh sea salt, and locally crafted gifts such as artisan jewellery and ceramics.

9. The Lakes by Yoo, Gloucestershire: Luxury wellness, nature-style

Best for: The luxury adventurer who still wants a solid nature fix

Imagine waking up in a luxury woodland cabin, surrounded by nothing but serene lakes and lush forests – sounds like a dream, right? At [The Lakes by Yoo](#), that dream becomes reality. Set in the heart of the Cotswolds, this private retreat – and brainchild of property developer John Hitchcox

and renowned designer Philippe Starck – combines design-led architecture with nature's beauty. Whether unwinding in a lakeside lodge, indulging in private yoga by the water, or taking a paddleboard out on the lake, this is luxury wellness with a side of adventure. Visitors can switch off and leave the stress behind.

10. Belmond Britannia Explorer: The UK's first spa on rails

Best for: Those who like to travel in style and wellness

Yes, that's correct – a spa *on rails*. The [Belmond Britannia Explorer](#) is the UK's first wellness suite on a train, offering the chance to indulge in luxurious treatments while taking in the spectacular views of the British countryside. The suite features a private treatment room, steam shower, and yoga sessions, all served with a side of scenic wonder. After all, why choose between relaxation and adventure when you can have both? It's luxury, nature, and a journey for the body and soul.