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## Escape lockdown: 10 last-minute holidays to quiet corners of the UK



Cornwall's Lizard Peninsula is a good bet for half term CREDIT: ISTOCK

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**T**his half-term holiday is up for grabs (those in Tier 3 look away now). There are cancellations in some of the UK's most-sought-after properties due to the ever-changing situation.

Here are some of the idyllic cottages, watchtowers and treehouses still available, where you can forget that 2020 ever rained on your parade.

### 1. Kate Cottage, Cornwall

A late cancellation has freed Kate Cottage up for half term, and it's a glorious find, on the Cant Farm Estate, perched on the edge of Cornwall's Camel Estuary. There are views across the water from all over the house, while inside there's a log burner for cosy hibernation, vast sofas, and huge doors with views from the sitting room down the sloping lawns to the waterfront.

There's a tennis court shared with the other residents at Cants Farm, the house is surrounded by green fields and woodland, and nearby is the enchanting coastal village of Porthilly. You're perfectly placed for walks along the South West Coastal Path and the nearby sandy beaches.

**Sleeps six; seven nights for £797 ([latitude50.co.uk](http://latitude50.co.uk)).**

### 2. Combermere Cottages, Cheshire/Shropshire

Due to cancellations the 12th-century Combermere Abbey Estate, in rolling countryside on the Cheshire/Shropshire border, has some rare last-minute availability in some of its dog-friendly holiday cottages. It's a magnificent setting, with 10 cottages, converted from the Abbey outhouses, in its vast, landscaped grounds.



Stay on the grand Combermere Abbey Estate CREDIT: LETS GET IT SHOT

Four of these are available for various dates in half term: they're all different shapes and sizes, but similarly fresh and elegant, with roll-top baths, comfortable sofas and cosy fireplaces. The Empress of Austria once called the abbey "the most romantic place in Europe". There are last-minute deals, so the best way to get in touch is by phone.

**Sleep 4-6; three nights from £400 ([combermereabbey.co.uk](http://combermereabbey.co.uk)).**

### 3. The Crag, Cornwall

Head to the microclimate of the Lizard Peninsula to stay in the Crag, an Arts and Crafts villa in an acre of grounds on a front line cliff top, some 300 ft above sea level with breath-taking 180 degrees panoramic views of the sea and bay. This is the secluded last house before the sea on a 'no through road' in a hamlet of fifteen houses, and your chance to escape it all in one of England's most southerly houses. The garden gate opens onto the coastal path offering miles of stunning circular walks, and only a hop and skip away is the small sandy beach of Housel Bay.

**Sleeps eight; 7 nights £2,935 ([ruralretreats.co.uk](http://ruralretreats.co.uk)).**

### 4. Brookside Cottage, Shotton, Stratford upon Avon

Brush up on the family's Shakespeare and stay in a beautiful Tudor thatched cottage just to the west of Stratford upon Avon, with Anne Hathaway's thatched house only a few hundred metres away. White and black and half timbered, Brookside is a genuine 15th-century cottage in the enchanting village of Shotton, which is full of thatched properties that look set to welcome Mrs Tiggywinkle. Inside, the house



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is full of traditional features, with wood beams everywhere you look, polished wooden floors and a glorious double-height sitting room. It's surrounded by a lush green garden, with vegetable patch and mature trees.

**Sleeps six; £2,327 for 5 nights ([booking.com](#)).**

### 5. Webstone House, Thimbleby, North York Moors

Webstone House is a charming 3-bedroom wood-beamed semi-detached cottage, fronted by an immaculate lawn, beyond which ponies roam in the surrounding fields. On the edge of the [North York Moors National Park](#), this is a tranquil place to escape the news, surrounded by undulating fields of green.



The North Yorkshire Moors Railway CREDIT: ISTOCK

It's close to the picturesque conservation village of Osmotherley and the National Trust-owned abbey ruins of the 14th century Mount Grace Priory. This is ideally placed for cobweb-blowing family walks in the Autumnal countryside, with a wealth of well-known trails running close by, including the Cleveland Way, the Coast-to-Coast and the Lyke Wake Walk.

**Sleeps six; £852 for 4 nights ([sykescottages.com](#)).**

### 6. The Boathouse, Stoke Gabriel, Devon

The Boathouse perches on the banks of the River Dart, with mesmerising views over the water and bobbing boats moored nearby from all the rooms. The high-beamed, double-height living/dining room has exposed stone walls and a balcony overlooking the water's edge. This is a fun place to stay, with a wrought-iron spiral staircase to the second floor. You're only five miles from the open sea, and outside the 40ft patio is bordered by unspoiled woodlands and enjoying more river views. In places the curtains are somewhat flouncy and interiors are somewhat dated (they're almost back in fashion), but with dazzling views and space like this, who's quibbling.

**Sleeps five; £1835 for 7 nights ([cottages.com](#)).**

### 7. The Lookout, Embleton, Northumberland

This is a rare opportunity to stay on the soul-stirring beautiful [Northumberland coast](#) in a property that has that well-known family-holiday essential: a Grade II-listed Watchtower. Unsurprisingly, the Lookout has astounding, inspirational sea views. It's large, but as the usual group and joint family holidays are off the menu, this half term a chance to stay in majestic properties and really let your family spread out, especially if you've been crammed in together for months. It's close to Holy Island, Bamburgh, with its castle, and Alnwick, with its castle, garden and Hogwarts connection, and the town's wonderful Barter Books, one of the UK's finest bookshops.

**Sleeps 12; 7 Nights for £2469 ([simplyseaviews.co.uk](#))**

### 8. Southwaite Green, the Lake District

Escape into a rural eco-idyll close to the western lakes of Crummock, Loweswater, Buttermere and Ennerdale: Southwaite Green has a stunning location, and has been carefully constructed to enhance and respect the local countryside. The four eco-holiday cottages, built in local stone, have simple, cosy interiors, and sit in 10 acres of grounds at the edge of Paddle Beck, with stunning views over the western fells. The surrounding land encompasses newly planted woodland, wildlife meadow, pond and an arboretum, and there's an abundance of wildlife including deer, foxes, red squirrels, badgers and the occasional flash of royal blue as a kingfisher visits the beck.

**Sleeps 6; 3 nights for £790 ([southwaitegreen.co.uk](#)).**

### 9. Ullapool, Scotland

On the shoreline in Ullapool, this grand former tweed mill has a superb, lonely position on the shoreline of the loch, close to the picturesque fishing village of Ullapool. This is another chance for your family to socially distance this half term, with six bedrooms, and five bathrooms.



Loch Broom CREDIT: GETTY

You can take a cruise across Loch Broom to spot seabirds, seals and even dolphins on a cruise across Loch Broom. There are walks up Ullapool Hill for wonderful views across the village and Loch Broom, and nearby is the peak of Stac Pollaidh and the Inverpolly National Nature Reserve. Dogs are welcome.

**Sleeps 12; 7 Nights for £1687 ([simplyseaviews.co.uk](http://simplyseaviews.co.uk)).**

### 10. Nettlecombe Farm, Isle of Wight

Ideal for a small family, the converted blacksmith's forge on Nettlecombe Farm is available for a few nights early on in half term week. Forge Cottage has its own garden, and a button-cute interior, with exposed brick walls. Nettlecombe Farm has been in the family for over a century, and is a working farm in the rolling green Isle of Wight countryside. There is a wide variety of animals to make friends with all over the farm. Kids will adore the chance to commune with the sheep, goats, pigs, geese and chickens, as well as giant rabbits, donkeys, a Shetland pony, two alpacas, reindeer and even an emu.

**Sleeps 3; £576 for 3 nights ([new.nettlecombefarm.co.uk](http://new.nettlecombefarm.co.uk)).**

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