

## TRAVEL TIMES Peaceful stay and great food at waterfront hotel

# Quick getaway for relaxation by the lake

By CRAIG GIBSON

**I**T'S hard to believe, but just one hour's drive from Glasgow took us into another world when we visited the Lake of Menteith Hotel.

Set in the heart of the Trossachs, the hotel is billed as the perfect quick getaway from the chaos of city life and I had heard good reports about it before we set off.

But would it live up to the hype?

The first impressions after a stunning trip through the countryside were encouraging. The staff were friendly and welcoming. The hotel, which has 16 bedrooms sits in a stunning waterfront position. It's been recently refurbished and its restaurant and bar offer good views over the water.

My baby daughter was particularly taken with the ducks who would sit on the grass and occasionally wander over to say hello.

Our room had its own porch, which was perfect for sitting out to enjoy morning coffee ... or something stronger in the evening and the country house feel of the rooms made the hotel seem more like a home than just somewhere to stay.

After a lovely cooked breakfast, it was time to explore. The towns of Callendar and Aberfoyle are nearby and both offer a wide selection of places to eat and drink while enjoying the spectacular scenery of the Trossachs.

Blair Drummond Safari Park is also close and is as popular with kids as it was when I was last there 30 long, distant years ago.

Back at the hotel, it's fair to say



■ The Lake of Menteith Hotel, left, in the heart of the Trossachs enjoys spectacular views



we enjoyed dining in the restaurant. Head chef Michael Hobbins take pride in using high-quality Scottish ingredients and it certainly shows, with specialities including Perthshire wood pigeon risotto and poached corn-fed Perthshire chicken breast stuffed with wet garlic and olives with a vanilla bean sauce.

There's also something special in store if you like whisky. The hotel has its own malt vault, where you can enjoy a wide selection of drams,

including a 1959 Macallan, which was a wee bit too pricey to be enjoyed!

But staying here isn't just about eating great food and drinking lovely wines and whiskies, there's lots to do near the hotel.

The Lake of Menteith offers fishing in spectacular surroundings. We watched as the little boats left shore early in the morning and stayed out all day.

On this occasion though, we were just happy to relax and take in the surroundings.

And that's what makes this place worth checking out. It's so close to Glasgow but it's so different and peaceful too. After two relaxing nights, we headed for home, determined to return as soon as possible.

● Double rooms at the Lake of Menteith Hotel cost from £130 to £160 per night. The hotel is currently offering some special deals on rooms during December and January, which must be booked before the end of September. For more information, visit [www.lake-hotel.com](http://www.lake-hotel.com) or call 01877 385258.