

3 – Plymouth

Plymouth is about a 20-minute drive from Soar Mill and is known for its large Navy base and Sir Frances Drake, who apparently finished game of bowls on the Hoe before heading out to sea defeating the Spanish Armada.

The centre has recently seen the opening of a multi-million shopping complex with all the latest designers stores to keep even the most experienced shopper happy for a few hours.

4 – Totnes

Comfortably placed in the rolling hills of South Devon, Totnes is a remarkable town. It is blessed with a fascinating history and stunning location on one of Britain's most beautiful and historically significant waterways, the River Dart.



Exeter Cathedral

America are an impressive. You can find tigers, lions, gorillas, orangutans, elephant, giraffes, zebras and black rhinos. www.paigntonzoo.org.uk

6 – Exmouth

Is well celebrated for its long two-miles of golden sand and is on the estuary of the River Exe, internationally known for its wildlife.

It is in the centre of East Devon's glorious countryside with Woodbury Common and beautiful towns and villages nearby. Exmouth has its own train station, only 25 minutes away from Exeter by train (and just 10 miles from the M5 motorway).

7 – Woodlands Family Theme Park

Indoors, outdoors, zoo-farm and nature days – Woodlands Family Theme Park

the best slides, the highest climbs and it has a life of its own.



Babbacombe Model Village

BETWEEN THE SHEETS

Mark Bloom enjoys fine food, wine – and scenery

Hotel as stunning as views

If you fancy some luxury accommodation, great food and service coupled with spectacular sea views then Soar Mill Cove Hotel in Devon is the place for you.

This family-run hotel, with spacious modern accommodation, is set in 2,000 acres of unspoilt National Trust coastal countryside and is a stone's throw from a quiet and secluded beach.

You have to go through the hotel grounds to get to the beach and the hotel is happy to make up a food and drink picnic basket for you to take on any outings there.

But the first thing you realise, after your complementary gin and tonic or cream tea on



arrival, is that it is free from the sound of traffic, mobile phones and anything else that can spoil this natural beauty.

This is most apparent in the lounge and dining rooms, as the sunshine filters through, with every table having a breathtaking view of the rolling sea a couple of hundred yards ahead.

This has location, location, location with a capital L and there cannot be too many settings like this around the coast. And the service and

detail provided by the staff and the superb decor matches its impressive setting.

As the award-winning chef prepares your evening meal, a pianist plays in the background as you sip pre-meal drinks in the lounge. When you are called for the meal served at your table, you notice all the national awards decorating the entrance hall. You know that you are not going to be disappointed and we were not.

A selection of the finest wines from around



the world is available – like the rest of what this hotel does, they are simply the best.

■ Soar Mill Cove Hotel, near Salcombe, South Devon, UK TQ7 3DS. For bookings or information phone 01548 561566 or email: info@soarmil-cove.co.uk

■ Tariff: Low season (February, March, October) £140, mid season per room (April, May, June, July, Sept) £190, high season per room, mid July, Aug, £240 per room.