

**THE  TIMES****Ultimate luxury – in a tent**

Under canvas at Wadi Tayeen, in the desert in Oman, where your own camp will be set up, giving you a base from which to explore the dunes and old forts

**Will Hide**

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## Desert camps in Oman, chic tents with four-poster beds in Goa and a canvas cabin in Montana – posh camping has finally gone global

### **Minaret Station** New Zealand

If you really want to get away from the neighbours, this is the place because it's in a stunning remote valley that can be accessed only by helicopter. You'll want to hike or try the incredible fly-fishing. Tents have wall-to-wall sheepskin carpets and a private deck with hot tub.

**Details** Bridge and Wickers (020-7483 6555, [bridgeandwickers.co.uk](http://bridgeandwickers.co.uk)) has two nights' full

board from £1,815pp (two sharing), including return helicopter transfers from Wanaka and the services of a private guide

### **Otter Creek** Goa, India

These three tents by a beach in the north of Goa come with four-poster beds, en suite bathrooms and private jetties overlooking a creek. Activities are low-key – birdwatching and chilling on the beach are about it, although a car and driver **can be arranged if you want to explore farther afield.**

**Details** From £342 per tent per week with One Off Places ([oneoffplaces.co.uk](http://oneoffplaces.co.uk))

### **Shahrazad Desert Camp** Egypt

This camp in the White Desert – so called because of the local salt formations – was opened last year and can be combined with a trip to Cairo. There are 21 tents, all with four-poster beds, traditional fabrics and en suite bathrooms. There's a natural spring pool in which to cool off and meals are served communally in a Beduin-style tent.

**Details** Anatolian Sky (0844 5719128, [anatoliansky.co.uk](http://anatoliansky.co.uk)) has a six-night trip that combines Cairo and the White Desert from £1,255pp, including flights, transfers, breakfasts in Cairo and half board in the desert

### **Bumdra Wilderness Camp** Bhutan

This wilderness campsite is tucked away in mountains at a height of 3,500m near the Bumdra monastery. Guests staying at Uma Paro hotel can trek there and stay overnight. After your day's hike, sherpas set up camp and prepare your meal as well as telling tales around the campfire.

**Details** Uma Paro (00975 8 271597, [uma.paro.como.bz](http://uma.paro.como.bz)) offers four nights at its hotel and one night camping from £1,540pp, with transfers within Bhutan, full board, guiding and activities

### **Longitude 131** Australia

When does a tent become an “eco-sensitive tented sanctuary”? Probably when you pay £1,300 a person to stay in one with views of the world's most iconic lump of rock. There's a pool and the Dune House, which has a lounge, library and restaurant. Guided tours of the area take place throughout the day.

**Details** Austravel (0800 9884834, [austravel.com](http://austravel.com)) charges from £623pp a night full board (minimum two-nights), including transfers from Uluru airport and guiding

### **Elephant Hills** Khao Sok National Park, Thailand

An alternative to a Bangkok add-on after a beach stay in Phuket, Elephant Hills is a camp in the south of the country. Guests can go on jungle hikes, canoe in lakes or help to feed and wash elephants. There are 30 tents, each with en suite bathroom.

**Details** Hayes and Jarvis (0844 4151918, [hayesandjarvis.com](http://hayesandjarvis.com)) offers five nights at the Kao Lak Merlin resort in September, followed by two days at Elephant Hills, from £1,049pp, including flights from Heathrow and transfers, and some meals

### **Ambrosia Farm** Bridgewater, NY State, US

The Featherdown formula in the UK has been transported over the Pond, so you can

expect the same rustic-posh tents that accommodate up to five adults, with hardwood floors, stoves and master bedrooms. Ostego county in rural, upstate New York seems a million miles away from Manhattan. It's a side of America that not many Brits get to see. Details two-night stays cost from £377 per tent (featherdown.com)

### **Rasa Jaipur, India**

Close to the historic Amer Fort, Rasa has 40 “canvas cubes” with large windows and high roofs. The furnishings are contemporary and there is satellite TV and air con. As well as exploring Jaipur, guests can go trekking, cycling, stargazing and kite-flying.

**Details** Steppes Travel (01258 880980, [steppestravel.co.uk](http://steppestravel.co.uk)) can arrange a ten-day tailor-made tour of Rajasthan, which includes two nights at Rasa, from £2,225pp with some meals but not flights

### **Fundu Lagoon Pemba Island, Tanzania**

If you want a remote tropical paradise island, then Pemba ticks all the boxes — warm waters, soft sand beaches, lazy days spent reading in hammocks. The tents at Fundu Lagoon are either by the beach or on a hillside, have teak floors and are connected with wooden, rope-banister walkways. The remote location makes it a good chill-out choice and there's some top-quality diving too.

**Details** Africa Odyssey (020-7471 8780, [africaodyssey.com](http://africaodyssey.com)) has a week, full-board, at Fundu Lagoon from £2,350pp, including flights from Heathrow and transfers

### **Wilson Island Great Barrier Reef, Australia**

“Shipwrecked in style” is the motto even though, strictly speaking, you'll be sharing your island (70km off Queensland) with five other tents. It's all about barefoot luxury — picnics on the beach, lounging in hammocks and snorkelling.

**Details** Wilson Island can be booked through Tailor Made Travel (0845 4568050, [tailor-made.co.uk](http://tailor-made.co.uk)) from £265pp per night (two sharing), full board, including transfers from

### **Heron Island Soneva Fushi Maldives**

As part of a stay here, you can opt for a night far from the, quite frankly, not very madding crowds, under the stars on a sandbank about a ten-minute boat ride from the hotel. Your tent has a comfy bed, bathroom and a telescope.

**Details** Scott Dunn (020-8682 5075, [scottdunn.com](http://scottdunn.com)) can arrange six nights' B&B in a villa and one night on the sandbank, including dinner and breakfast, flights and transfers, from £3,330pp (two sharing)

### **Galapagos Safari Camp Santa Cruz, Equador**

This camp makes a good add-on if you want more time in the archipelago after a cruise. There are eight tents, all with a balcony and views of the national park and ocean, and en suite shower. You're not far from the island's tortoises, while bird-lovers can hope to spot finches, warblers, mockingbirds and owls.

**Details** Cox & Kings (020-7873 5000 [coxandkings.co.uk](http://coxandkings.co.uk)) can arrange a three-night stay here after a four-night cruise and two nights on the mainland, with flights, excursions and most meals from £3,995pp

**Aman-i-Khás** Rajasthan, India

The ten luxurious tents at this five-star hideaway are vast, with cotton drapes separating the bedroom and bathroom. Expect minimalism, with oriental-style beds, ceiling fans and marble baths. The camp is on the edge of Ranthambore National Park, to which safaris are organised to search for the Bengal tiger.

**Details** Steppes Travel (01285 880980, [steppestravel.co.uk](http://steppestravel.co.uk)) has three nights, full-board, plus a game drive, from £725pp as part of a tailor-made trip

**Amanwana** Moyo, Indonesia An hour by seaplane from Bali, this really puts the glamour into camping. Opt for an ocean-front spot and you're just a hop, skip and a jump from the sea, where you can snorkel with rays and turtles. The tents are well kitted out with double beds and bathrooms with rain showers.

**Details** Real Holidays (020-7359 3938, [realholidays.co.uk](http://realholidays.co.uk)) offers three nights in an ocean tent with seaplane transfers from Bali, all meals and non-alcoholic drinks, and guiding, from £1,565pp

**Blue Mountains** New South Wales, Australia

A jolly swagman may once have camped by a billabong, but we're guessing that he didn't do it in as much style as this. Although only two hours from Sydney, you're in the wilds, woken every morning by the sound of kookaburras. Beds are outside on individual raised wooden platforms, so your roof is the Southern Cross. Meals are cooked on the campfire.

**Details** From £679pp a night, including full board and guiding (020-7426 9888, [blacktomato.co.uk](http://blacktomato.co.uk))

**Umpqua Lighthouse** State Park Oregon, US

At the Umpqua Lighthouse State Park on the Pacific shore, there are six yurts, each of which (this being America) is kitted out with bathroom, fridge, microwave and TV, although you need to bring your own bedding and food. It's a great spot for hiking and the park is centred on a stretch of sand dunes, some 500ft high.

**Details** Yurts sleep up to seven and cost from £36 a night (001 800 452 5687, [traveloregon.com](http://traveloregon.com))

**Wadi Tayeen** Oman

For many people these days luxury isn't about gold taps or Rolls-Royce transfers, it's about escaping from others. In Oman you'll certainly do that, being collected from Muscat and driven into the desert, where your own camp will be set up as a base from which to hike the dunes and explore old forts and small towns.

**Details** A three night, all-inclusive package from Muscat starts at £1,920pp with Hud Hud Travels (00968 9292 0670, [hudhudtravels.com](http://hudhudtravels.com))

**Clayoquot** Vancouver Island, Canada

This spot on the west coast of Vancouver Island, situated at the mouth of the Bedwell River, is about as remote as it's possible to get. There are 20 guest tents as well as a cookhouse and massage room. Activities range from bear and whale watching to hiking, fishing and riding.

**Details** Frontier Canada (020-8776 8709, [frontier-canada.co.uk](http://frontier-canada.co.uk)) can organise a three-

night stay here from £3,730pp (based on two sharing), which includes seaplane transfer from Vancouver, full board and activities

### **Torres del Paine** Chile

Lake Toro is just outside the national park itself but still in the middle of wonderful scenery, and it's here that you'll find this camp of 17 yurts, all with heating, en suite bathrooms, terraces and windows that are made for stargazing. A separate building houses a massage room too – handy for kneading out post-hike bruises.

**Details** Journey Latin America (020-8747 8315, [journeylatinamerica.co.uk](http://journeylatinamerica.co.uk)) offers a four-night, full-board stay from £1,699pp, which includes return transfers from Punta Arenas and hiking excursions. Flights from London start at £1,099pp

### **The Ranch at Rock Creek** Montana, US

Get off your horse and drink your champagne, as John Wayne undoubtedly never said. City slickers at this dude ranch stay in one of eight canvas cabins with big log beds, elegant rugs and gas fireplaces. You can go riding on the 6,000-acre ranch, try rodeo, mountain biking or rafting.

**Details** From £610pp a night (two sharing), including full board and activities (001 877 786 1545, [theranchatrockcreek.com](http://theranchatrockcreek.com))

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