

# The hut parade

Boutique retreats might be a big hit, but nothing beats the nostalgic pull of a beach hut. Make sure you pack your designer cozzie though – our top five are more chic than shack...



1. The Beach at The Grove, Hertfordshire



2. Needleview Beach Hut, Dorset



5. Fishermen's huts, Whitstable



3. Number 27 Shruff End, Wells-Next-The-Sea



4. Three Shades of Blue, Hayle

## 1 The Beach at The Grove, Hertfordshire

Fancy a hut with five-star luxury? Book a room and a pew at The Grove, in the countryside near Watford. It's created a luxury beach resort in its gardens, and the main attractions are the six super-smart beach huts with chandeliers and picket fencing. Three of these serve as outposts for the hotel's Sequoia Spa, so you can have a massage right on the sand. And if you're (armchair) sporty, you'll enjoy the hotel's seasonal performance: the British women's volleyball team practising outside while you're being pummelled. Doubles from £225 (01923 807807, [www.thegrove.co.uk](http://www.thegrove.co.uk)).

## 2 Needleview Beach Hut, Mudeford, Dorset

Those seeking something a bit more traditional should make for our favourite hut on Mudeford Sandbank, overlooking the Isle of Wight. Quintessentially English, it's been interior-designed with The Hamptons in mind – plenty of washed-out blues and yellows, and a decked terrace. In true *Carry On* style, you'll have to bring your own sleeping bag. From £420 per week; sleeps four (01202 393661, [www.needleview.co.uk](http://www.needleview.co.uk)).

## 3 Number 27 Shruff End, Wells-Next-The-Sea

Bookworms will recognise Shruff End as the name of the ramshackle house in Iris

Murdoch's *The Sea, The Sea*. Don't be daunted. This clapboard confection on stilts is as cutesy as they come. You can't overnight here – but if you like things this twee, doubtless you wouldn't entertain the idea of sleeping without a duvet anyway. That said, after sampling the owner's extensive wine collection, you'll probably spend the rest of your visit prostrate on the beach. From £35 per day; see [www.beach-huts.com](http://www.beach-huts.com) for hiring details.

## 4 Three Shades of Blue, Hayle

These sizeable (two-bed) pastel-clad '60s' chalets sit on their own private patch just outside of Hayle, overlooking the sand

dunes and sea. Interiors are lime-washed, kid-friendly, and conducive to loafing. The surfing here is good – but the sunsets are better. From £250 per week (020 8691 0120, [www.thelittlebluehouse.co.uk](http://www.thelittlebluehouse.co.uk)).

## 5 Fishermen's huts, Whitstable

Atmospheric beams, pitched roofs, a fridge stocked with local beer, and views over yachts in the harbour – there's nothing fishy about these former cockle sheds in one of the UK's most popular seaside towns. Except the oysters from the owner's restaurant down the road. From £300 for two-night stays (01227 280280, [www.hotelcontinental.co.uk](http://www.hotelcontinental.co.uk)).