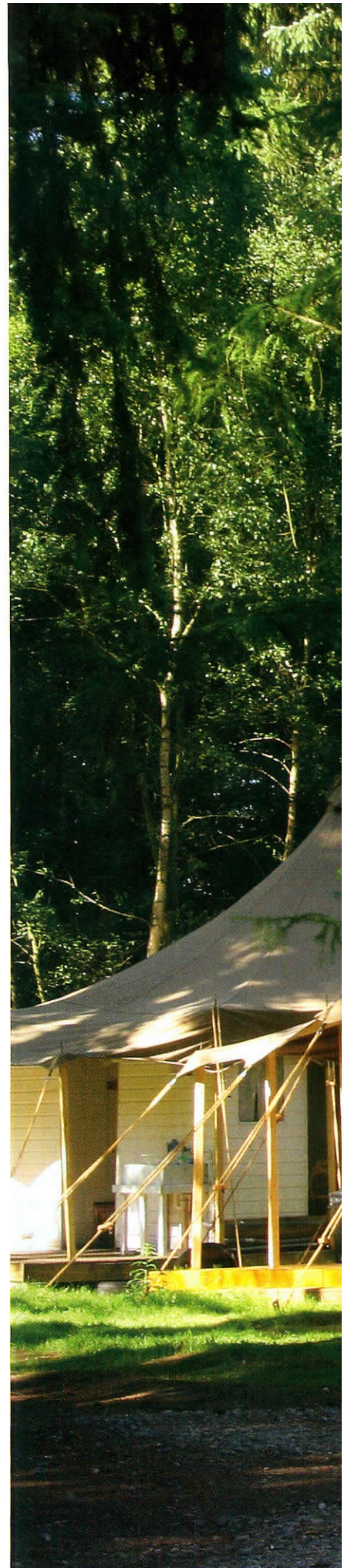


# LUXURY CAMPING SAS

Yorkshire is full of perfect places to pitch your tent, says Cool Camping expert Andrea Oates.







**Previous page:** 'glamping' tents at Jollydays. **Above:** indoors and out, kids are happy to make their own entertainment at Jollydays.



**“JOLLYDAYS NEEDED TO BE VERY COMFORTABLE FOR NON-CAMPERS LIKE ME.”**

It's been described as 'the Ritz in a tent'. Welcome to Jollydays, where four-poster beds, chandeliers and comfy sofas take the place of soggy airbeds and damp sleeping bags. Glamping, cool camping, posh camping - call it what you will, this is luxury camping amid the wonderful countryside of North Yorkshire, not far from Helmsley.

Owner Carolyn van Outersterp, who set up Jollydays two years ago with her husband, landscape architect Christian, admits that she used to hate camping - so she set out to create an ultra-comfortable campsite with all mod cons. "Jollydays needed to be very comfortable for non-campers like me," she says. Glampers love the freedom of getting back to nature, going off grid and being eco, but are unwilling to compromise on style and comfort, Carolyn says. "They can be found curled up on a mountain of sheepskin and cushions, nibbling on local delicacies while a bottle of fizz cools in a neighbouring stream."

"Jollydays is the culmination of a 15-year dream of combining a love of camping and comfortable and chic hotels. It's an extension of our simplified lifestyle, with beautiful surroundings, great food, and socialising around a roaring log fire. We have 10 tents at present within the beautiful 200-acre wood: five tented lodges and five bell tents. You can book and turn up for a night, a few days, a week or longer - just bring suitable clothes and that's it! No other packing. No hassle and set up, just turn up."

"Our camp attracts many people: couples, families, reunions, walkers, non campers, and young and old. If you just want to escape and get away from it all, have a reunion or celebrate a special event (or just life), Jollydays offers all this in a beautiful location." And it's environmentally sound. "Our camp has no permanent structures, and other than the odd wooden pole

(and the buried bio digester dealing with effluent off-grid) nothing is attached into the ground, ensuring we tread lightly," says Carolyn. "We use minimal electricity and an increasing proportion of our energy usage is sustainable. We do however use LPG gas to heat water (which is more energy efficient than electricity). Spent water is sent to a bio digester and then released into the ground on site." Christian and Carolyn have four young children and noticed that most holidays are based for families of four, so they created a tent for up to six. "Jollydays restorative breaks are designed to allow you to re-experience the joys of childhood - and for kids it's heaven on earth, even for those addicted to their Playstations," Carolyn says.

With no fewer than three National Parks offering more than 1,000 square miles of spectacular coastline, rugged moorland, and gently rolling hills, Yorkshire is full of other great places to stay under canvas. We sought out beautiful countryside gems where we could admire the view and enjoy the laid back atmosphere, and where the kids could run free, climbing trees, building dams, playing on rope swings or making campfires. Our next stop was deep in the forest where we found a clearing with, no, not a gingerbread house but Spiers House campsite, with its playground, ranger activities and bike tracks galore.

Take your mountain bikes to make the most of your trip to this Forestry Commission site, although with its adventure playground, ranger-led nature walks, and orienteering all on-site or nearby, your kids will be spoilt for choice on the activities front. There's even forest laser combat for Horrid Henry types! The gravel paths are great for biking around, and way-marked cycle and footpaths lead directly from the site into the forest for further pedal-powered exploration.

No need to worry about any traffic here. You are about a mile from the nearest road and the very low speed restrictions on the site help to preserve the tranquil atmosphere that prevails, despite its size. As families head off to explore local attractions, you are quite likely to spot the odd pheasant taking an undisturbed, afternoon stroll by your tent.

Just a few miles down the road, you'll come to Rosedale Abbey Country Caravan Park, where campers get the best spots on the 'two tents-only' riverside fields. Great for playing Tarzan – just grab one of the many rope-swings hanging along the tree-lined river which meanders through this lovely site with its backdrop of sweeping hillside moors, and the pretty village of Rosedale Abbey as its next door neighbour. There's also a large play area for ball games, and a playground, but most kids seem to prefer the natural playground provided by the river for paddling, building dams, fishing with nets and swinging from the rope swings over the water.

Comfort, nostalgia and halcyon days of summer are what the Jollydays camping experience is all about.



#### WHERE TO FIND THEM

Jollydays

[www.jollydaysluxurycamping.co.uk](http://www.jollydaysluxurycamping.co.uk)

Tel: 01759 371 776

Spiers House Caravan Park & Camps

[www.forestholidays.co.uk](http://www.forestholidays.co.uk)

Tel: 01751 417591

Rosedale Abbey County Caravan Park

[www.rosedaleholidaycottages.co.uk](http://www.rosedaleholidaycottages.co.uk)

Tel: 01751 417 272

