

LIVING LIKE KINGS

David Dalziel enjoyed a weekend in the lap of luxury at Kingsbarns. The only drawback was having to leave at the end of it



TRAVEL

What could be better than a weekend away with family and friends? Well, how about spending that weekend in luxury five-star accommodation with all the space and comfort you could wish for? That's exactly what I did at the end of last year, when I took my family to Morton of Pitmilley for a break with old friends.

Morton of Pitmilley is a sumptuous self-catering resort that offers a range of

activities – making it perfect for families, groups, couples, weddings or even corporate getaways.

Located in Kingsbarns, around seven miles from St Andrews, this super complex was the perfect spot for the four Dalziels and five McFadzeans.

We all stayed in The Rowans, a beautiful four-bedroom house which easily accommodated our large group, which included four adults and five children ranging in age from six down to one.

Despite the number of occupants, there were never any fights over who was to get into the toilet as there were no fewer than five of them.

The underfloor heating was a real treat, as it's something I hadn't experienced before – perfect for a chilly Scottish December.

And the facilities were outstanding, with a huge wall-mounted TV, DVD player and iPod docking station – perfect for entertaining the kids – and a

pristine kitchen with the added bonus of a separate wine fridge – perfect for entertaining the adults.

When we managed to tear ourselves away from the house, there was plenty to keep us all busy. Our Saturday morning started with a quad-biking session for the mums, while the dads entertained the children at the onsite play park.

The quad-biking took place at Chesterstone Farm, a 20-minute drive from Kingsbarns. The best way I can describe the girls' experience is this: one had a cold, the other a baby-related sleepless night, and neither looked too enthusiastic about the quad-biking when they left. When they returned,

for the ladies, it was time for the dads to treat themselves – with a tour of the Eden Mill brewery and distillery, which is based just outside St Andrews.

We received a warm welcome from general manager Kevan Fraser and we quickly had a beer in our hands, sampling the fine produce of the brewery.

Kevan had an infectious enthusiasm for the company, its products and basically everything to do with his job. He certainly knew his stuff and gave us a fantastic tour of the site and told us about all the processes involved in making the beer and also distilling their own whisky, which is a fairly new venture for the company – as is the gin they have started to make. It's exciting times

The Eden Mill brewery and distillery



“Now, fair's fair, and after all that fun for the ladies, it was time for the dads to treat themselves – with a tour of the Eden Mill brewery and distillery, which is based just outside St Andrews

however, they were both beaming, having had a fantastic experience driving up and down a mud-splattered hill. As my wife proclaimed: “Quad-biking rocks.”

They were also on cloud nine because next on their itinerary was a relaxing spa session. Morton of Pitmilley offers a huge range of spa treatments, from facials to reflexology and manicures to Swedish massage. It was just the ticket after the exertions of the quad-biking.

Now, fair's fair, and after all that fun

for Eden Mill, as they have expanded their premises and have some pretty impressive ideas.

I was also taken by the fact that some of the staff there have degrees in brewing from Heriot-Watt University. If I had known there was such a thing when I was at school, I might have chosen a different career path. My careers adviser has a lot to answer for.

After sampling an interesting selection of brews – my favourite of which was the dark porter made with ginger



and chillies – it was back to the comfort of our weekend home for a nice meal and a glass of wine after the kids were all safely tucked up in bed, exhausted from a fun day at the park, swimming pool and games room.

Morton of Pitmilley also boasts an indoor tennis court, where the dads renewed childhood rivalries with a couple of sets on the Sunday morning while the children played air hockey, table tennis and pool next door.

Eilidh Smith, resort owner, is a keen tennis player who has represented Scotland and offers coaching onsite. I enjoyed a chat with her about her achievements in the sport and her ambitions to represent Great Britain in the near future.

Morton of Pitmilley offers so much, and a weekend wasn't nearly enough to explore all that the surrounding area has to offer. As much as we did squeeze in, the simple pleasure of relaxing in the

lap of luxury was a real highlight. And I can confess it wasn't just the children who had a tear in their eyes when it was time to say goodbye to our wonderful weekend retreat.

TRAVEL FACTS

- Morton of Pitmilley, Kingsbarns KY16 8QF
- Telephone 01334 880466
- E-mail stay@pitmilley.co.uk
- Visit www.pitmilley.co.uk

- Morton of Pitmilley has a variety of accommodation, ranging from one-bedroom cottages to four-bedroom luxury steading homes. A five-star three-bedroom property for a three-night weekend stay costs £35-£60pppn, depending on the time of year. A four-star three-bedroom property for a three-night weekend stay costs £23-£40pppn, depending on the time of year.

- www.chesterstonefarm.co.uk
- <http://edenmillst Andrews.com>

