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# travel

**BIRMINGHAM'S** Big Bang Fair is back at the NEC from March 15-18. The show has a range of stands and hands-on experiments to show kids just how exciting science can be. SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment will be at the event, teaching children about the science behind the theme park rides and its conservation work. For more details, go to [thebigbangfair.co.uk](http://thebigbangfair.co.uk).

**hot spot** 28C – seven nights' all inclusive the 4★ Platinum Esplendor Tamarindo is for £718pp with flights from Gatwick on March 20. See [thomson.co.uk](http://thomson.co.uk) or call 0871 230 2555.

## MAKE THE MOST OF THE LONGER DAYS IN THE UK

### 1 Isle Of Wight



#### NETTLECOMBE FARM

THIS is luxury and farming combined. There are nine different plush places to stay which sleep from three to ten in converted farm buildings.

There are great facilities for both kids and dogs with three large grassy play areas and a petting zoo which is home to reindeer, donkeys and even an emu.

Guests also have full use of three fishing lakes and weekly yoga sessions.

Breaks cost from £394.50 including ferry travel for a seven-day stay for four people. Please quote "Visit Wight Offer" to receive the discount. See [nettlecombefarm.co.uk/cottage-oats](http://nettlecombefarm.co.uk/cottage-oats).

### 2 Derbyshire



#### KEDLESTON HALL

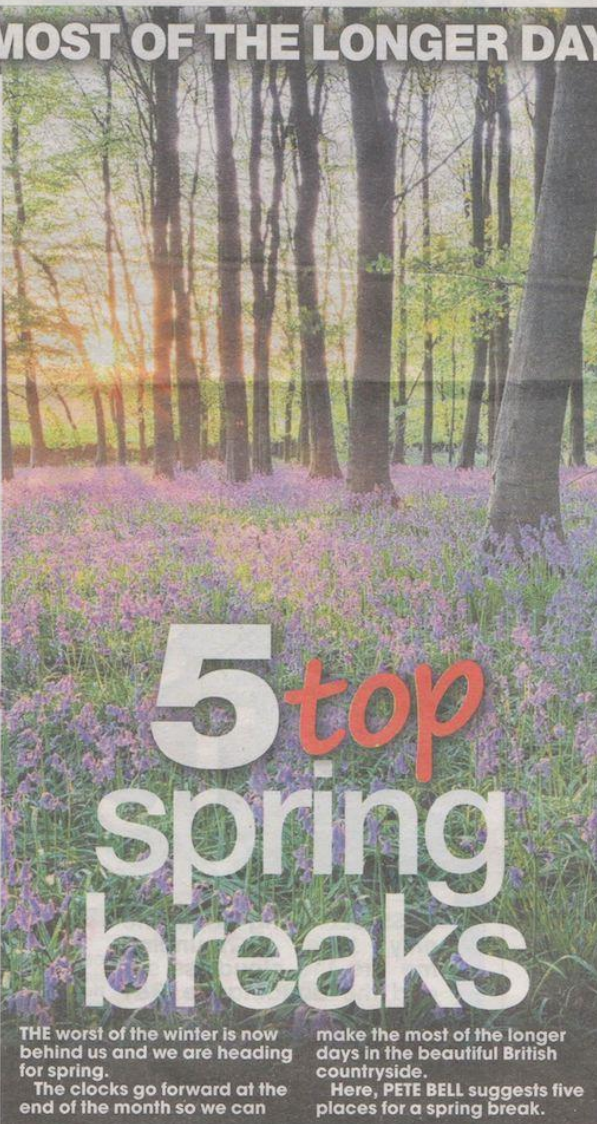
THE National Trust-owned hall is surrounded by fabulous grounds – and it looks its best in the spring.

Winding lawns are lined with trees and shrubs and there are plenty of places where you can take in the views.

Closer to the hall nestles a small garden with ornamental shrubs and trees.

The Kedleston Country House Hotel has five individually styled rooms. Stay from £160 for two people in a double room with breakfast.

Go to [visitsderby.co.uk/stay/hotels/the-kedleston-country-house](http://visitsderby.co.uk/stay/hotels/the-kedleston-country-house) for details.



# 5 top spring breaks

THE worst of the winter is now behind us and we are heading for spring.

The clocks go forward at the end of the month so we can

make the most of the longer days in the beautiful British countryside.

Here, PETE BELL suggests five places for a spring break.

### 3 North York Moors

#### BLUEBELLS AND HERITAGE

A FIVE-MILE circular walk from Grosfont in the North York Moors National Park takes you through the beautiful bluebell-clad woodland floor on your way to the hamlet of Beck Hole.

The return route follows the waters of Murk Esk and The Rail Trail – the original

Whitby to Pickering line which operated during the heyday of ironstone mining in the 1800s. See [northyorkmoors.org.uk](http://northyorkmoors.org.uk).

Stay at Eighteen97 B&B, Goathland, a stone cottage built from the remains of an old church. It has two guest rooms.

B&B is from £95 per night. See [northyorkshire-bedandbreakfast.co.uk](http://northyorkshire-bedandbreakfast.co.uk).

### 4 Kent



#### HOLE PARK GARDENS

IN early April, these gardens are packed with spring bulbs. There are swathes of crocuses, bluebells and daffodils across the 16-acre gardens and woodland.

The Camellia Walk boasts helleborus and early-flowering cherry and magnolia trees, while the woodland and meadow floor are a sea of primroses and blue scillas.

Stay at The Potting Shed in Benenden which sleeps two. Its gardens have mature topiary hedges, vegetable patches and flower-filled arbours.

The cost is from £345 to £525 per week. See [tinyurl.com/hnm8rd9](http://tinyurl.com/hnm8rd9).

### 5 Perthshire



#### BALLINTAGGART FARM

OVERLOOKING the Tay Valley, this is the perfect base from which to explore the beautiful county of Perthshire.

And spring is the ideal time to visit the castle at Blair Atholl and Faskally Wood on the banks of Loch Dunmore.

The farm has a kitchen garden where food is grown for the restaurant and the cookery workshops it holds.

Activities include canyoning, river tubing, white water rafting and clay pigeon shooting. See [naelimits.co.uk](http://naelimits.co.uk).

Stay at Ballintaggart Farm from £110 per night for a double room including breakfast. See [ballintaggart.com](http://ballintaggart.com).