Love is All Around on Exmoor

It seems like the whole world has royal wedding fever, but if you are looking for a more subtle type of romance – Exmoor has it all.

The classic English romantic novel - ***Lorna Doone: A Romance of Exmoor*** - was published a 150 years ago, next year and has never been out of print. Based on a group of historical characters and set in the late 17th century, the author R D Blackmore’s lush description of the Exmoor landscape was a highlight of the book. Stay in splendid style at the Old Rectory Hotel [(www.oldrectoryhotel.co.uk](http://(www.oldrectoryhotel.co.uk) 01598 763368 B&B from £180). This appealing boutique establishment has been regularly voted one of Trip Advisor’s ‘Top 10 Most Romantic Hotels in the UK’ and ideally placed to meander over the coast and moors to see Blackmore’s inspiration for yourself.

Our dark skies are perfect for starry-eyed couples who will just need a blanket and a flask of something hot to appreciate the millions of lights that illuminate the inky black sky over Exmoor – no light pollution here. Exmoor National Park was Europe’s first Dark Sky Reserve. Stay at the lovely Dunkery Beacon Hotel ([www.dunkerybeaconaccommodation.co.uk](http://www.dunkerybeaconaccommodation.co.uk) 01643 841241 B&B from £80) where you can just step out of the door to appreciate the perfect rurality of the location. Here you’ll find delicious food and panoramic views to linger over until it gets dark.

If you don’t want to say ‘I do’ in front of millions of people, then Exmoor might just be the place to escape to. Set within 17 glorious acres of rolling countryside, Little Quarme ([www.littlequarme-cottages.co.uk](http://www.littlequarme-cottages.co.uk) 01643 841249 self-catering cottages for two from around £400) is the definition of a picture-perfect, pastoral wedding venue where you can get married in an outdoor gazebo overlooking the Quarme Valley. Small weddings are their speciality.

The publication of the ‘Lyrical Ballads’ by Wordsworth and Coleridge in 1798 is widely credited as the beginning of the English Romantic movement in literature and Poetry. This beautiful collection of poems was inspired by a favourite Exmoor coastal walk to Valley of Rocks in Lynton. Sink in to understated luxury at the nearby, award-winning Highcliffe House ([www.highcliffehouse.co.uk](http://www.highcliffehouse.co.uk) 01598 752235 B&B from £120). Its fabulous coastal views and adult-only policy is a serene and peaceful retreat to peruse the poems.

Often referred to as the food of love, Oysters reputation as an aphrodisiac is legendary. Home grown on the Exmoor coast, Porlock Bay Oysters are amongst the purest available in the UK and used by many of the Top Chefs in the country. Stay nearby at the charming Glen Lodge (www.glenlodge.net 01643 863371 B&B from £100). From here you can admire the distant sea views and take a stroll down to the Weir to see the Oyster beds, followed, perhaps, by sampling these seafood delicacies at a local restaurant.

For more information on things to do and see and places to stay on Exmoor see [www.Visit-Exmoor.co.uk](http://www.Visit-Exmoor.co.uk)

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