



December 2007



Sydney, Newton Park

Tourists Offered B&B at University

Bath Spa University is entering the holiday bed and breakfast market, and will be offering budget accommodation for tourists and other visitors to Bath next summer. Nearly 400 beds in student halls of residence on its picturesque Newton Park campus will be made available from June 2008, in comfortable rooms at affordable prices and with free parking.

The deal is part of Bath Spa's new Conference and Events Services, which are being launched with a reception and mini guided tour for potential clients in the Michael Tippett Centre at Newton Park on Monday 17 December.

Throughout the next summer vacation the University will provide B & B for any visitors to Bath looking for cheaper than average but quality accommodation. More than 300 single rooms can be booked at a price of just £24 per night, with breakfast in the main university refectory included. A further 50 plus en-suite rooms with breakfast will be available at £35 per night.

Bath Spa University's Conference Services Manager Fiona Livingstone says the offer is incredible value for money at the busiest time of year for one of the UK's premier tourist destinations. "In summer it can be hard to find anywhere to stay in Bath, and when you do find a room it's often really expensive. According to latest tourist board figures the average cost of a three to five star hotel room in the city is £88 – and you may have to pay extra for breakfast. We will be charging far less than that for B&B, in the most beautiful of surroundings".

A large amount of free parking will be available for all guests. With parking in Bath in notoriously short supply, they can leave their cars behind and take advantage of the regular university bus service into the city centre.

The campus has already been inspected by the English Tourist Board, with Bath Spa aiming for a grade of three stars.

In its new venture, Conference and Events Services, the University also hopes to expand further its thriving conference business. Bath Spa is already well known for hosting prestigious events such as the International Guitar Festival in July and August and Songwriting Festival, also in August.



Justin Saltmeris

National triumph for Bath Spa student

Bath Spa University student Justin Saltmeris is the winner of the Musicians' Benevolent Fund's Songwriting Award for 2007. Justin, who studies Commercial Music, will use the £5000 prize to cover the costs of recording, promoting and touring an E.P. of original music. He also intends to purchase new equipment to support the new album and use in future projects.

Justin was one of six talented young songwriters short-listed from applicants on pop and commercial music degree courses at universities and colleges across the UK. The finalists were invited to perform before a world-class judging panel at the famous music venue The Bedford in London, on Tuesday 27 November 2007.

The judging panel was chaired by Guy Chambers, who has co-written five albums with Robbie Williams, netting sales of over 40 million units, and has recently collaborated with artists such as Tom Jones, Beverly Knight and Will Young. Other judges included Nik Kershaw (musical icon of the 1980s and more recently a collaborator with artists including Ronan Keating, Lulu, Imogen Heap and Gary Barlow) and Cathy Dennis (writer of hit singles including Kylie Minogue's 'Can't Get You Out Of My Head' and Britney Spears' 'Toxic').

Guy Chambers praised the quality of all this year's finalists, saying the standard was really high but "Justin was the clear winner". Justin was thrilled with his award, saying "It's an unbelievable surprise."

Bath Spa University Course Director for MA Songwriting (the only course of its kind in the world), Andy West, commented: "It's always exciting to see great talent and commitment rewarded and this is particularly true in Justin's case. I would not be surprised to see Justin ascend to the levels of success achieved by the judges of this competition and by former winners of this award The Wombats".



Nikita Lalwani

Three Bath Spa Graduates Shortlisted for Book Awards

Students from the University's creative writing courses are making an even bigger impact on the world of literature. Three new authors who are recent graduates from Bath Spa have been shortlisted for major book awards.

Nikita Lalwani, who graduated from the University's MA Creative Writing course in 2005, has been nominated for a Costa Book Award. Her debut novel, *Gifted*, is on the final shortlist of four in the First Novel category of the Costa prizes for 2007.

The Costa is among the most prestigious awards in contemporary fiction. In August Nikita, who is 34, was included in the longlist of 13 books for the Man Booker Prize.



Sally Nicholls



Marie-Louise Jensen

Nikita wrote her novel while on her Bath Spa course and is currently studying for a PhD at the University. *Gifted*, published this year by Viking, is a witty and subtle novel about Rumi, a young maths prodigy, whose family have come from India to live in Cardiff.

Richard Kerridge, Director of the Bath Spa Creative Writing Course, said: "This is well deserved recognition. It is a superb novel, thought-provoking and funny. Nikita's talent was clear from the start. She has worked carefully and responsively with her tutors, especially the novelists Gerard Woodward, Richard Francis and Tessa Hadley."

The winners in all five categories of the 2007 Costa Book Awards will be announced on 3rd January 2008.

Meanwhile, Sally Nicholls and Marie-Louise Jensen, recent graduates from the MA Writing for Young People Course, have both been shortlisted for the 2008 Waterstones' Children's Book Prize. Their first novels are due to be published at the beginning of January.

Julia Green, Writing for Young People Course Leader, says it's the first time two Bath Spa students have been shortlisted for the same literary prize: "We were already celebrating their success in gaining publishing deals. For both of them to be on the shortlist for this award is a remarkable achievement. It ensures these two wonderful new writers will receive the publicity and promotion they richly deserve. It's also a real mark of the success of our MA course."

The debut novel by Sally Nicholls, *Ways to Live Forever*, published by Scholastic, is a moving, tender but also darkly humorous and courageous story about love and loss. It is told in a deceptively simple style, in the voice of 11-year-old Sam, who is dying from leukaemia.

Marie-Louise Jensen's novel, *Between Two Seas*, is for teenagers. Published by Oxford University Press, this is a beautifully written, original story set in 19th century England and Denmark. She wrote the book while studying at Bath Spa.

The winner of the Waterstones Children's Book Prize will be announced on 13 February 2008.

University Expert Trains Observers for Pakistan Election

Professor Iftikhar Malik, from the School of Historical and Cultural Studies, has been helping with preparations for the forthcoming parliamentary election in Pakistan.

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Professor Iftikhar Malik

Professor Malik, an authority on the Muslim world, was invited to train more than 70 election observers from the European Union. He was among specialists invited to a training workshop in Italy in the first week of November.

During his three days at a university in Pisa Professor Malik advised the EU observers on many aspects of politics and culture in Pakistan. The election, called by President Pervez Musharraf, is scheduled for 8 January.

Professor Malik, who is from Pakistan and a highly experienced writer and commentator on his native country, gave briefings and lectures on the dos and don'ts of travelling there without offending local people.

He told BSU Online: "I was delighted to help. It's important to reassure the observers, but also to make them aware they need to be careful, especially when visiting polling stations in remote tribal areas. My advice to women included doesn't wear a short skirt and to everybody don't get into a debate about politics or religion or drink alcohol in a Muslim country."

Textile Students Dominate Innovation Awards



Students from MA Textiles courses have won three out of four main prizes at the University's 2007 Innovation Awards. Bath Spa receives funding from the Regional Development Agency to award staff and students who are developing innovative ideas for new products and services.

In the prize-giving ceremony at Carpenter House on 11 December the Vice Chancellor, Professor Frank Morgan, presented awards of up to £5,600 to four students. Three are developing new products for the textile industry.

The first prize went to Anne Selby, from the MA Textiles course, for her design of a machine that will modernise a traditional Japanese production technique called Arashi Shibori. This is a labour-intensive method of wrapping fabric around a pole for pleating and patterning it.

Anne said: "I am thrilled with the award. It will enable me to develop a piece of equipment which will take the labour out of the process, making Arashi Shibori techniques easier and more economic."

The other prize winners are: Maggie Powell, Artwork Technical Demonstrator and part-time textiles design student, for her work on testing digitally printed furnishing fabrics; Mark Haley, an Environmental Biology undergraduate, for his development of a new mobile phone application to identify wildlife; Gill Hewitt, an MA Design (Textiles) student, for her method of testing sound-absorbent textile art panels.

Two English Literature students, Anne Curley and Karen Fernandez, received merit awards for their Shakespeare interactive show reel.



Theatre Company Returns to Minack

The Full Tilt Theatre Company at Bath Spa University has pulled off another major coup. After their sell-out Shakespeare by the Lake production of Hamlet last year, which transferred to the Minack Theatre, students have been invited back to the legendary open-air venue in Cornwall.

In June 2008 Full Tilt will be staging another Shakespeare adaptation, Comedy of Errors, at the Minack, after performances at the next Bath Shakespeare Festival. There are also plans for the production to go on tour abroad to Florida and Turkey.

The Minack Theatre is famous for its quality drama and stunning cliff top location. It was carved as an amphitheatre out of the rock high above Porthcurno Beach. Comedy of Errors will be directed by Bath Spa Senior Lecturer in Drama Emma Gersch, who was also director of Full Tilt's equally radical and triumphant Macbeth earlier this year. She is delighted to be returning to the Minack:

"It's a very magical place. The students who took part in Hamlet there still talk about it as the ultimate highlight of their lives. A review in the Cornishman newspaper described our production as the jewel in the crown of the Minack summer season."

"To play in a sold-out 900-seater amphitheatre is a dream even to the most experienced actor, let alone a trainee. Building on the success and excitement of Hamlet, it's a tremendous honour to be invited back to such a prestigious place. It provides the opportunity for more students to have the Minack experience."

Comedy of Errors, by the Full Tilt Theatre Company, is scheduled for seven performances at the Minack Theatre, including two matinees, from June 9-13 next year. It's a new adaptation written by Bath Spa's Head of Drama Gunduz Kalic, who also adapted Hamlet and Macbeth so successfully.

Full Tilt is also hoping to take its Comedy of Errors production to Miami and Istanbul next year if funding can be obtained from the British Council.

Japanese Culture Club Wows Students

If you like eating sushi and meeting people from Japan, there's a new fun way to do so. Three Japanese students have set up their own social club at the University to celebrate the culture of their home country and introduce it to others. The Japanese Culture Society has already thrown a party and organised a film evening. More events are planned in the New Year.

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The enterprising all-female trio behind it are Kagari Saisu, Yuko Toda and Yuri Masuya, all here at Bath Spa on a study year abroad. They began the society for the benefit of their fellow Japanese students, who are the University's largest foreign presence, but they found that many others also want to join in.

The society's first event, a food and games party at the Newton Park Students Union on 5 November, was a huge success, despite coinciding with Bonfire Night. It attracted around 80 students and University staff from across the board. They sampled delicacies like sushi, Japanese soup and noodles and green tea, all prepared by Kagari, Yuko and Yuri themselves. There was also a chance to have a go at origami and play some traditional Japanese games.

The three organisers are amazed at their society's widespread popularity. "We expected maybe 20 people at the party," said Kagari. "We were really surprised and happy that so many turned up. There's more interest in our culture than we realised among British students. It's also good for us in making new friends."

There's such an enthusiasm for all things Japanese at Bath Spa that the University is now offering its students and staff a chance to learn the language. An exciting new Japanese language course has started, organised by the International Activities Department. The weekly classes, for complete beginners, are taught entirely in Japanese by a native speaker with considerable teaching experience.

The course reflects the increasingly strong links between Bath Spa and Japan. The University has more foreign students from Japan than any other country. Of the 146 international students on modular courses at the University in 2007-8, a total of 41, more than a quarter, are Japanese. A further 120 Japanese students have enrolled on English language, summer school and other short-term programmes at Bath Spa this year.

The connection has triggered great interest among other students from the University in going abroad to study in Japan. The new language course is aimed primarily at anyone planning an exchange visit to Japan next academic year.

For more information about the Japanese Culture Society contact:
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