



## ASK ROB



Ask Rob for advice on your holiday - you can email him direct at [robffarrow@dche.co.uk](mailto:robffarrow@dche.co.uk) or to us via the editor at [bella.brodie@kelseymedia.co.uk](mailto:bella.brodie@kelseymedia.co.uk)

## TOP TEN TIPS

# For a good glamping holiday

We take a trip behind the scenes for some fresh tips from glamping expert Rob Farrow

**O**ver the years we've welcomed a vast array of different types of guests to our parks, be it couples, families or groups. Whatever your reason for having a glamping break there are certain things that hold true for all bookings; which you can do before, during and after your stay, to ensure that you have a great time. So here; for our readers benefit are The Ten Commandments for Holiday Success!

### BEFORE YOU BOOK:

**1** Involve everyone in the planning. A holiday is only a holiday if everyone enjoys it. Speak to your partner, family, friends and whoever else will be travelling with you, then make a list of what people want from their holiday. You then have something you can discuss with the site. Remember, the site staff are there to help. The bookings staff are good, but they are not mind readers so tell them what you want and need.

**2** Familiarise yourself with your accommodation. It is very tempting to go online and book your holiday using your phone or tablet whilst on the train, bus or during your lunch break; after all that's one less job. However, this is your precious holiday time, don't rush into a decision. You don't want to book accommodation whilst you're distracted only to arrive and find it's not what you thought it was. No site will be selling accommodation blind, take time to look at the images and videos then ask any questions before you book.

**3** Know where you're going. In today's world it's commonplace to use a satnav to get to your destination. Most sites not only display a post code but also a full address and a Google or Bing map on their directions page which will allow you to see not only the site but the surrounding area. As many glamping sites are secluded, if you check through the

directions page you will often find advice on how to reach the site that is designed to help you. Sometimes crucial information like "the post code will lead you down a single track dead end road, please turn in at the farm instead" is there to help you get to the site easily with as little hassle as possible so you arrive relaxed and calm rather than frustrated by just following the satnav the being boxed in by a combined harvester down a single lane track and then having to reverse for a mile.

### ONCE YOU HAVE BOOKED:

**4** Speak to the site if you have any questions. Different sites have different policies most have specific check-in times and check out times, knowing these saves kicking your heels waiting for your accommodation to be available or worse an awkward conversation with the site team and a rushed departure before you have to pay for late check-out. Similarly if you have

Rob's parks include Woodland Escape in Somerset [www.wegh.co.uk](http://www.wegh.co.uk) and Dorset Country Holidays [www.dche.co.uk](http://www.dche.co.uk)

specific requests or requirements ask the site. I once had a call that a medical equipment supplier had arrived to deliver breathing apparatus for a guest due to check in. The team had to quickly drop everything and rearrange the accommodation to fit it in, but imagine for a moment if it would not have fitted. Letting the site know such things in advance means they can prepare. You know your needs best, the site know the accommodation, just speak to them if you have any questions.

**5** Be Prepared. Baden Powell's scout motto has stood the test of time. We all know the adage "there is no such thing as bad weather, just unsuitable clothing". The weather can change quickly so check the weather forecast for your destination in the week running up to your holiday and pack accordingly. This way you can also order additional items you may need from the site. Better to have a waterproof jacket and wellingtons with you and not need them, than to try and reach a yurt in a field wearing canvas shoes after a rain shower.

**6** Plan your journey. A little forward planning can make your life much simpler and help you enjoy the start of your holiday. Check the predicted time for your journey several days in advance and build in extra time so you have a smooth journey; you would be surprised how many people assume they can leave work, pack a car and reach a site that is two and a half hours away in two hours. Before you leave, check your route for traffic hot spots and plan to avoid them so you have a hassle free journey. Ask the site for any local knowledge of short cuts and roads to avoid.

#### WHEN YOU ARE ON SITE:

**7** Listen to the staff & ask questions. Most sites will give you a personal check-in, showing you around and how the equipment works. Just like the aeroplane pre-flight safety briefing or a fire drill, these may not be very interesting but they are there to help you get the most from your stay. This is also a great opportunity to ask the staff about things like pubs, restaurants, local take-aways or where shops and car parks are in the local towns. The staff will have experience and be able to guide you.

**8** Remember to think about other guests and the site equipment. People like different things. To have music with a heavy bass line pounding through the floor and up through your bones may make you feel alive, however it may give the couple next door with a 1 year old a headache and a sleepless night. A little consideration for your fellow guests goes a long way to making your stay more enjoyable. Similarly, no one likes to return home to find they have an additional bill for damages. Respecting the accommodation's equipment and letting the site know if there is accidental damage can save you from a bill. Honesty is the best policy. Sites expect some breakages, tell us before you leave and we can deal with it. It's not a good idea to try to hide it, that won't work. It's always found out and the site can only assume it was malicious and you will be charged.

#### IF THE WORST SHOULD HAPPEN:

**9** It is possible that things can go wrong. Many people forget that a staycation is still a holiday and so it is a good idea to have holiday insurance that way

if you suffer a car break down or someone is ill and you can't go you are covered. If something is not right or happens on the site, tell the staff immediately. It's not very English to raise an issue to someone's face but it is worth remembering that most holiday accommodation providers have a simple term and condition that they have to be told of any issues whilst you are with them. After all we're only human, how can we fix things if no one says anything? By telling the staff you may well be surprised what they can do to assist and save your holiday. If you do need to raise an issue remember to be polite and friendly. In general, people are always happy to go further for a friendly person than an aggressive one. Many sites now also run a 'guest of the month' programme where the staff choose their favourite guest who receives a reward. Some firms even give the staff a budget so they can make guests stays nicer with complimentary items, so it's worth remembering that the staff will also be rating you too. Being polite is its own reward but constructive feedback can also have additional benefits.

#### ONCE YOU HAVE BEEN:

**10** Give feedback. A lot of staff have their end of season bonus linked to good feedback in which they are named. As such, if you have had a great time, give feedback to the site. If you have suggestions or constructive comments then send these too. As site managers we are always looking to improve our services.

*Rob*

#### THE GLAMPING SHOW

Rob will be one of the industry experts on hand at this year's Glamping Show, which runs from 21-23 September at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire. Those wanting to find out more about creating glamping sites or pop-up sites for events can book a one-to-one with Rob to find out more about how he can help. Visit [www.theglamping.show.com](http://www.theglamping.show.com) for details.