

travel



Jardins Secrets

Nîmes

If this hotel were a supermodel, it would be Lily Cole

The look Incredibly feminine and delicate, Jardins Secrets is right in the heart of Nîmes. Set back from a walled garden, its four original rooms have been joined by 10 more in the building next door. There is also a new shop, a cosy bar, a spa with a hammam, a hot pool and a massage room with a crackling fire where you can enjoy lavender scrubs and hot-oil massages. This B&B is a modern take on old-school opulence, with thick silk curtains, canopied baths and open fires.

The front row Londoners and Parisians in the know, quiet weekenders.

Get out of bed for The Orangery, which is the loveliest room. Obviously you can wander round the ruins in Nîmes, but then again you could lie by the quiet shaded pool reading de Maupassant.

Throw a tantrum about It's terribly quiet and very gentle, so there's no point coming if you love rugby and have a habit of knocking things over.

Speak to my agent Double, from £175. Ring Chic Retreats on 01284 828804 or visit chicretreats.com.



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Les Jardins Secrets

Ranked among the best 'Little Gem' hotels

It's so pretty, so gorgeous, a four-bedroom bed and breakfast in the heart of Nîmes, swathed in thick silk curtains and huge, twinkling 18th-century crystal chandeliers. Decorated by a meticulous stylist and her photographer husband, Les Jardins Secrets is very feminine, with lots of candles, tiny chirping birds in cages and silver pots of smoky Chinese tea. The Orangery is the loveliest room, with crackling open fires and canopies covering both beds and baths. When you're least expecting it, you'll find a slice of chocolate cake and a milk jug filled with orange rosebuds on a tray. There's a pool in the oasis of a garden with olive trees dipping into the water. Eat breakfast here in the shade: hot coffee and croissants accompanied by jams made from violet, jasmine and rose.

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