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Why farm holidays lead the pack by Becky

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One wonders whether it is sheer coincidence or the result of a common theme running throughout the South Westâ€™s tourism industry. Either way the fact remains that all three slots in the peninsulaâ€™s self catering and sustainable tourism categories selected for this yearâ€™s Visit England Awards to be held in Leicester on May 22nd have been secured by farms in Devon and Cornwall. They will take on 350 other finalists from all over the country for the national accolades.

One can speculate endlessly about why farm holiday accommodation may be a cut above the rest where self-catering and bed & breakfast are concerned but we think it is probably down to a handful of fairly obvious factors. First and foremost, farmers and their wives are not like absentee landlords letting out second homes as a sideline. When you are living on the spot, you are clearly in a better position to maintain properties and ensure that everything is spick and span. Also, when you are encountering paying guests on a face-to-face basis rather than over the Internet or â€˜phone, you tend to go out of your way to ensure that everything is perfect and to avoid any opportunity for embarrassment.

Secondly, farms have the advantage of having plenty of room. This means that there is never any problem with parking spaces and many farms provide facilities way beyond pure accommodation. Heated swimming pools, games rooms and secure play areas for children are just some of the extras that holidaymakers can now find on many farms in the South West and elsewhere around the country.

Finally, the other edge that farmhouse accommodation has is that both adults and children can enjoy free benefits that simply donâ€™t exist in other holiday properties. Really wholesome food and superb home cooking are clearly a delight for all but everyone who normally lives in an urban environment cannot help but enjoy the sights and sounds of a working farm. Helping with collecting eggs, milking the cows and witnessing the lambing season are just some of the ways in which families can reconnect with nature and kindle memories that will last a lifetime.

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