

# OPINION

## WHY CAN'T THE ENGLISH?

*Art makes London a Mecca for visitors from all over the world – it's impossible to be bored, whatever your taste and interest. But there is a downside; if you want to visit the capital or need to put up visitors, where should a person stay? In an overpriced hotel, frozen into a faux-Georgian or globalised style?*

*It's time Britain took a tip from the competition – Berlin. Still one of Europe's most tumultuously transforming cultural centres, it boasts a number of highly original "art hotels". Lars Strochen's Propeller-Island City Lodge, for example, is billed as a "Gesamtkunstwerk" – a multi-media artwork (see [www.propeller-island.com](http://www.propeller-island.com)).*

*Musician and composer Strochen created his continually expanding masterpiece by designing each room as a unique space, often using recycled materials. The mood is whacky, voyeuristic, crazy – mirrors, lights, cages, sunken beds, upside-down floors, objects retrieved from the city's past.*

*A different mood prevails at the Kuenstlerheim (Artists' Home) Luise. Housed in a classical city palace, former convent and a brand new annexe, there are rooms for every budget and taste, from nuns' cells to grand bourgeois spaces. Bang in the city centre, Berlin's public and private galleries are within walking distance. Over 50 artists designed each of the rooms, and as with the Propeller Lodge, you can cyber-visit each one ([www.kuenstlerheim-luise.de](http://www.kuenstlerheim-luise.de)) before selecting the one you want.*

*Instead of hanging it on the wall, we can live it, breathe it and imagine a world in which our daily life is experienced on a different level – and without costing the earth. Is this utopia?*

**Corinna Lotz**