





Clockwise from left: Penhayl Cottage exterior; a cottage bedroom; St Ives Harbour Beach; Ann and Alan Clegg



## Penhayl Cottage, Cornwall

The Cornish tourism industry owes much to Rosamunde Pilcher. The Cornish-born writer's novels are televised on Sunday nights on German TV channel ZDF, helping attract the 314,000 Germans who visited the South West in 2013.

For Ann Clegg, owner of Penhayl Cottage, a five-star self-catering business in Lelant (the village where Pilcher was born), there's an opportunity to promote her business to a mature market that's keen to know more about Cornish history, culture and things to see and do.

"We provide an information sheet about places to see that are used in the films," she says. "This week I've written to all the Germans who've stayed with us over the past four years, with a link to the latest programme filmed at Godolphin and the Isles of Scilly."

Ann says her German guests particularly value precise information about the cottage and area before they arrive, on subjects ranging from the safety of local beaches and car parking to activities such as cycling and canoeing. When it comes to bedding preferences, the typical German king-size bed has two separate mattresses, so Ann's German guests sometimes ask for two single duvets.

Ann also translates emails, supplementing her basic German with translation tools to make sure she's found the right turn of phrase. She has also had help from her guests in perfecting English-German translations, including information on signs around the house. "We had two teenagers who kindly went round and translated some of my German into better German. They were smashing people. It's lovely to have that sort of camaraderie."

"It's so important that we're able to produce things in other languages," she says. "It makes foreign guests feel more welcome."

[www.penhayl-cottage-cornwall.co.uk](http://www.penhayl-cottage-cornwall.co.uk)

### > Reaching the right audience

Once you've identified an overseas market, how do you target it? A tried and tested way is to develop relationships with partners who have international reach – whether that means tour operators, consortia or your local destination organisation.

Lizzie Rohan runs No 54, a five-star B&B in Helmsley, North Yorkshire. She is an accommodation provider for Scoot Cycling Holidays, a cycle tour operator based in York which recently organised a press trip for a German journalist and photographer. As a result, No 54 was mentioned in German magazine *Brigitte* and received an influx of German guests.

"Scoot paid for the photographer and journalist to stay at No 54," says Lizzie. "I think Scoot chose us as we have a close working relationship with them; they have a premium product and want to offer the best available to their clients."

Lizzie also attracts American walkers through her relationships with tour operators. "The Americans we get here come through Macs Adventure up in Glasgow; they come to do the Cleveland Way or the Inn Way," she says. In both cases, it was the tour operators who contacted her and came to do a recce of No 54. "I imagine our reputation is what helped them to choose us," Lizzie says.

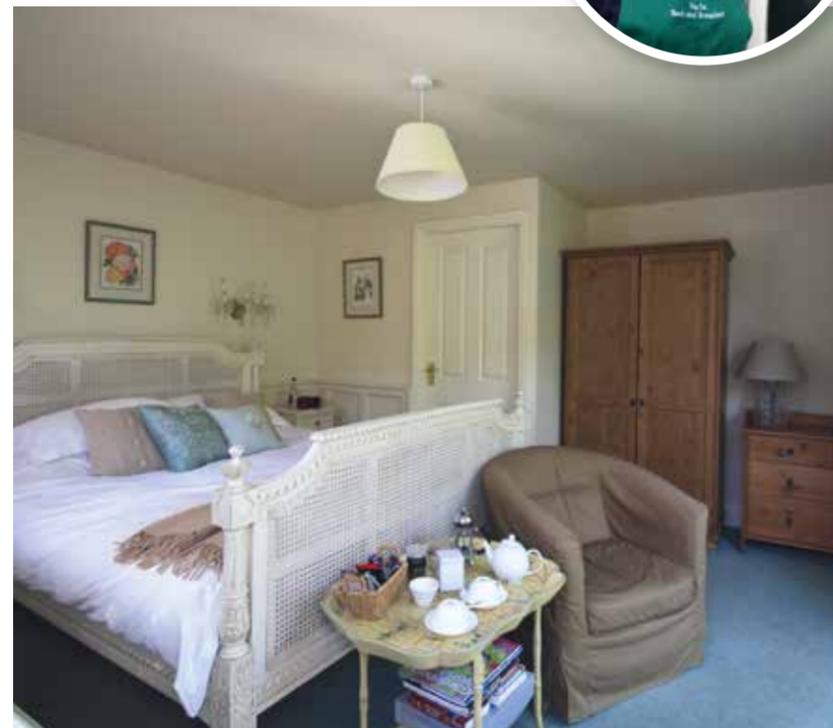
If you're in self-catering, marketing your business through a big brand such as Premier Cottages or Cottages4you may also give you international reach – especially if you can manage to tap into their promotional activity.

"For Premier Cottages, we worked with the director of marketing to pull together a press trip from Germany to one particular cottage with sustainability as its unique selling point," says Anke.

Review websites are an increasingly important way to attract an international clientele. "TripAdvisor has 24 separate



No 54 exterior; owner, Lizzie Rohan; a spacious bedroom at No 54 (below)



language websites including the English one," says Brian. "If you have, say, guests who leave a review in Finnish, that will appear first [above other reviews] on the Finnish website." The site also allows potential guests to automatically translate any foreign-language review into the relevant language.

### Speaking the lingo

If you want to attract overseas visitors, it can be useful to have foreign-language content on your website – which should also help with your search engine optimisation (SEO) for foreign-language search terms.

But be careful using automated tools such as Google Translate; while superficially attractive, they can sometimes be detrimental. "While that's possibly better than nothing," says Anke, "poorly translated information doesn't fill potential visitors with confidence. I would encourage people to have their website checked by a native speaker if they have a go at it themselves."

Historic Royal Palaces has a website in five languages – French, German, Spanish, Italian and Brazilian Portuguese – but its audio guides are in many more languages, which is attractive to both tour operators and independent travellers. "They're in all those languages on the website," explains Ann, "plus Russian, Korean, Mandarin, Japanese and Dutch."

For small accommodation businesses, an alternative might be to have foreign-language information about your business and local attractions, as self-catering owner Ann Clegg does (see panel, opposite) – or even just a foreign word of welcome when guests arrive.

"Surprise your guests by welcoming them to your B&B in their own language," suggests Tim Richardson of foreign-language specialists QR Languages. "Don't be embarrassed: they will appreciate the effort." ■

### Attracting international markets

- Research international visitors at [www.visitbritain.org/insightsandstatistics/markets](http://www.visitbritain.org/insightsandstatistics/markets).
- Check your website statistics to see if there is demand you haven't explored. VisitEngland's Online Marketing Toolkit has guidance on using Google Analytics at [www.visitengland.com/onlinemarketing](http://www.visitengland.com/onlinemarketing).
- Tap into the marketing efforts of tour operators who have international reach; they organise familiarisation trips for journalists who can give you a mention in international media.
- Use social media and encourage international reviews if possible.
- Consider translating your website and email marketing but don't publish automated translations without getting them checked by a native speaker.