

Travel – have a holiday in Perthshire

COLOURFUL COTTAGES KICK OFF A VIBRANT LETTINGS SEASON AT MAINS OF TAYMOUTH COUNTRY ESTATE & GOLF COURSE

As the self catering sector reopens after its long layoff, ahead of what it hopes will be a very vibrant “fully booked” summer, a Highland Perthshire country estate is using colour to say that it’s glad to be back.

Multi award winning Mains of Taymouth Country estate and golf course at Kenmore is known for the character and luxury of its traditional steadings cottages, which carry a 4 and 5 star VisitScotland rating. Cottages offered in the original farm steading include a stunning converted farmhouse with a contemporary extension, whilst others – The Smiddy, Granary Court and The Stables – reference the history of the former working estate farm, purchased by current owner Robin Menzies’ great grandfather in 1922. There’s even a quirky couples cottage called Bell Tower.

Robin’s wife Irena has long been known for her interior design eye, and over the years, has lovingly furnished and decorated each cottage, having lived in many of them herself with her family. Often, she has “given over” favourite pieces of artwork, furniture and ornaments, much of it from local craftsmen and artists, to the lettings portfolio, knowing that it will enhance the properties décor, and overall look.



As the estate got ready to re-open Irena found herself, in her words, “playing around with colour”, as she decided to use Farrow & Ball paints to create new dramatic looks in several of the cottages.

“I would say that the décor and the furnishings in these steading properties are, in many ways, very traditional for country cottages,” said Irena. “We have log burners, we have wooden flooring with extravagant rugs, large leather sofas, solid wooden furniture, and mainly, the walls are off white, and can feature the natural brick or stone.”

“There’s always a luxurious touch though, through soft furnishings, through bedding, and we have many special one off pieces of furniture,” she added. “I’ll happily mix old and new. Artwork often depicts local scenes, or is by a local artist that I know.”

Irena explained that she decided to add feature walls to some to the cottages using Farrow & Ball colours that were quite dark and dramatic, such as F&B Hague Blue, F&B Denim, a dark

navy, and F&B Railings, a dark green. Dark purple also made an appearance.

“I’m really pleased with the results,” said Irena. “It’s given the cottages a completely new look, dark and sexy I call it, and we very much hope guests will love it.”



Irena said that the farmhouse now had an uber glam cinema room, complete with a large Chesterfield sofa, silver curtains, and silver uniform lamps.

“It has an old style Hollywood glamour theme you could say,” she said.

There’s an abundance of space in the farmhouse, which includes a fantastic ground level kitchen with AGA, solid oak floors, underfloor heating and floor to ceiling glass for maximum natural light. Naturally, it’s ideal for large family groups, and as such, Irena felt that a cinema room was the logical next choice in this property.

“It’s one of those houses where you can enjoy being together

in the large open plan living area, but still have plenty of time apart doing other things, and having peace and quiet, if you want," she said.



"I really enjoyed planning and choosing the furniture and accessories for the cinema room," said Irena. "The interior design angle has always been something I have really enjoyed personally, and I've been very fortunate to be able to use these skills in the family business too."

"Many of the cottages hold lots of memories for me," finished Irena. "We'd live in a cottage for a while with our three children, refurbishing it to a five star lettings standard, and then it would pass into the lettings portfolio as the business grew, and we'd move into another one, and start all over again."

"People still say to me when will you get your forever home Irena!"

"I may not always have got the benefit of the luxury

interiors, hot tubs and saunas, but at least our guests can! It's been amazing to welcome them all back, and have these lovely properties truly appreciated."

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