



Welcome

House of the Northern Gate
Dunnet Estate
Thurso, Scotland
KW14 8AF

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For additional information and booking enquiries, please contact George Dunnett at info@houseofthenortherngate.com or on +44 1463 566026









The House of the Northern Gate is a beautiful, exclusive-use Highlands coastal estate, where an elegant, luxurious house is surrounded by incredible views in a remarkable setting. You will feel warm, welcomed and inspired by the stunning views of Dunnet Bay, the Atlantic ocean and Orkney.

You can find the house on Dunnet Head, the most northerly point of mainland Britain. This is where our ancestors came from 200 years ago and where, in 2018, full of excitement, we bought the house and embarked on a multi-year renovation. We have strived to combine the highest standards of comfort with a focus on sustainable materials and renewable technology.

The estate includes 1800 acres for hiking, a secluded white sandy beach with crystal clear water, dramatic cliffs with incredible views and hidden caves and lochs to explore. Every visitor is enchanted by nature here.

The house has a very rich history. It was built in the late 1800's and was visited by the Queen Mother in the 1950's as a retreat after the death of King George VI. It makes an unforgettable venue for large groups and families to get together and we hope to welcome you soon.

The Dunnett Family



Where are we?



POSTCODE: KW14 8AF

what3words: ///imitate.blissful.private

The house is on the northernmost headland of the United Kingdom mainland: Dunnet Head.

We recommend having your own transport to get to the house and to explore the region. We can arrange luxury transfers for you.

Travel to the house usually involves a train or plane or drive to Inverness and then a 2h 30min drive north to the house along the beautiful coastal scenery of the A9.

Alternatively, you can fly to Wick airport which is 30min away. Or take a train to Thurso, 20min away.





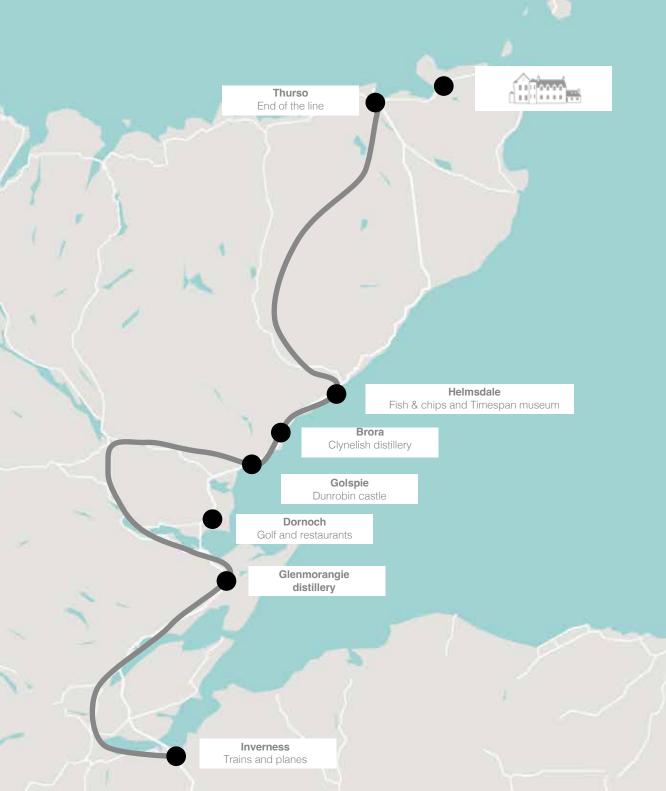


By train

Day trains from London to Inverness then car hire (see car hire section). There is a direct train from London to Inverness everyday but most change in Edinburgh.

Sleeper trains from London to Inverness are a romantic and exciting way to get to the Highlands. You then hire a car in Inverness (see car hire section). See www.sleeper.scot

Trains from Inverness to Thurso. The beautiful Far North line is a slow but stunning way to get to Thurso, our nearest town, which is a 15 minute taxi ride from the house





By car

Car hire: Usual providers at Inverness airport. At Inverness airport you will find Europear, Hertz, Avis, Sixt, and Enterprise (note that Sixt and Enterprise are a short but frequent shuttle bus from the

Car hire: Local providers in Inverness town and airport. In addition to the international car hire brands, there are local providers in Inverness who can deliver to the airport or to the train station.

- Jack's Car Rental can deliver the car to the train station or airport. They do not have online booking but can be emailed for a quote. info@jacksselfdrive.co.uk
- Focus Car Rental have a good range of cars available from the train station which you can book online, including electric cars, Land Rovers and pick-ups. www.focusvehiclerental.co.uk

Car hire: Local providers close to the house.

- Richard's Car Hire in Wick www.richards-garage. co.uk/hire
- Autoequip in Wick are an agent for Hertz +44 1955 609214
- 4x4 Hire Scotland www.4x4hirescotland.co.uk

EV charging

Charging is available at the house.





By plane

Flights from London and the rest of the UK:

BA and Easyjet to Inverness from London then car (see car hire section). Loganair and Easyjet fly to Inverness from other cities such as Birmingham, Manchester and Bristol.

International flights: KLM fly to Inverness and to Aberdeen from Amsterdam Schiphol where you can take Eastern Airways to Wick. An alternative is to connect through London or Edinburgh to Inverness.







We can help you plan a perfect stay in the north of Scotland and can provide additional services that you may need, including a daily turndown service, catering, a butler service, transfers and a concierge service to book activities.

The house was extensively renovated between 2018-2021 incorporating a very high-standard of materials and environmental considerations. The result is a warm, comfortable house which, even in the middle of winter, runs entirely on renewables from ground source heating, solar and local wind.

Inside, the house has been redecorated in keeping with its original character.



The **lounge**, with its open fire and spectacular coastal views, makes a wonderful room for relaxing and good conversation in your group. In the turret is a vintage telescope for watching the ships in the Pentland Firth - as the admiral who built the house once would have done.



The **dining room** seats up to 22 and includes a fireplace and views out to the bay. It is decorated with paintings of local scenes from the past and present by family artist Alex Williamson.



We have a large dining room served from a large, well-equipped kitchen or a separate catering kitchen.

There is also a library, lounge, TV room and boot room with table tennis. The lounge has an open fire and all rooms having incredible views.

In the walled garden is a well-equipped gym.

We have nine very comfortable bedrooms. Seven large double rooms have en-suite bathrooms and two rooms share a bathroom.

Two rooms can be configured as twins and we can set up a ground-floor room as an accessible bedroom (with nearby accessible bathroom) if needed.



The **library** contains a selection of English and French books that you are welcome to borrow during your stay. It makes for a quiet retreat for reading and work or a conversation over a post-dinner drink. It can also be used as a small dining room for an intimate dinner.



We have **two well-equipped kitchens**. A family kitchen and a catering kitchen for the use of professional caterers.









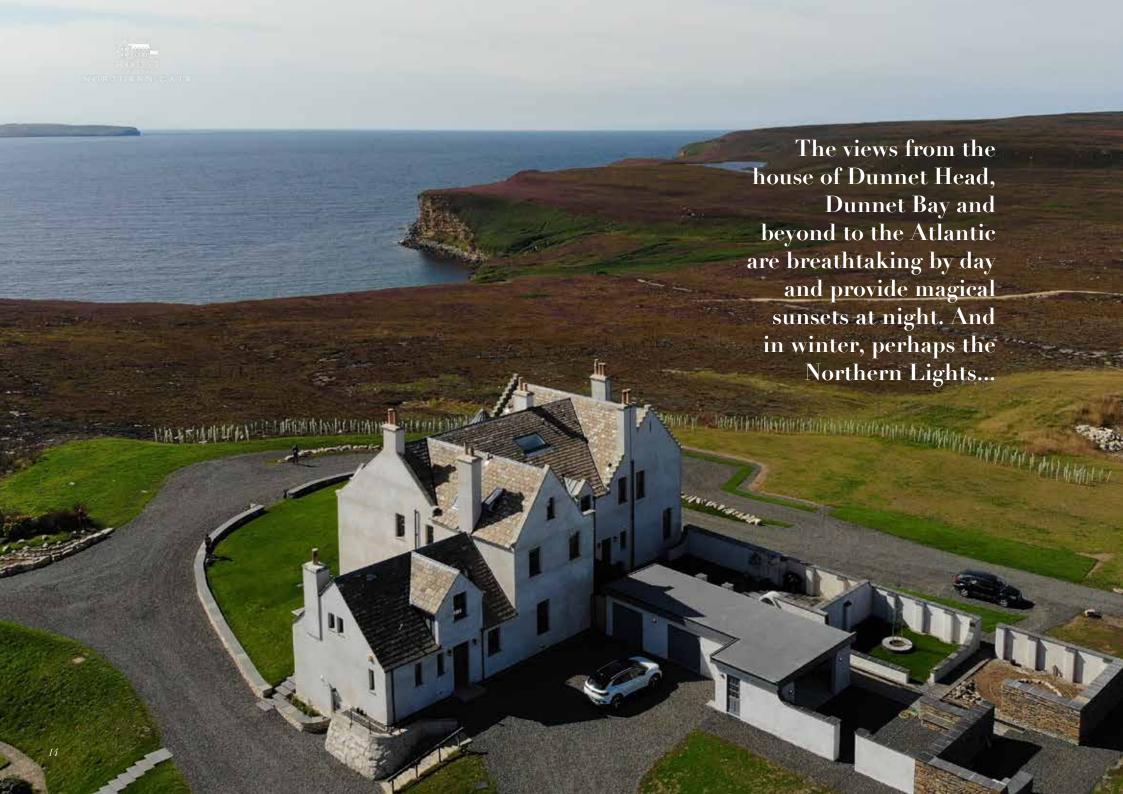




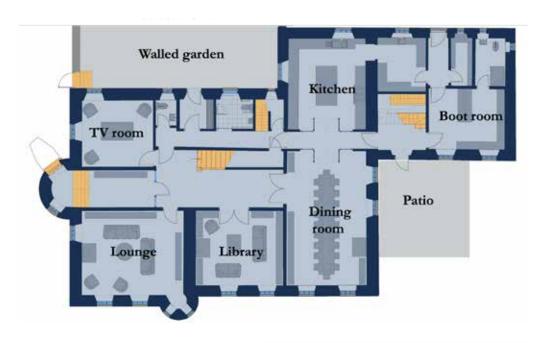
The main hall is at the centre of the house and includes a piano for entertaining



The **boot room** can also be used for table tennis





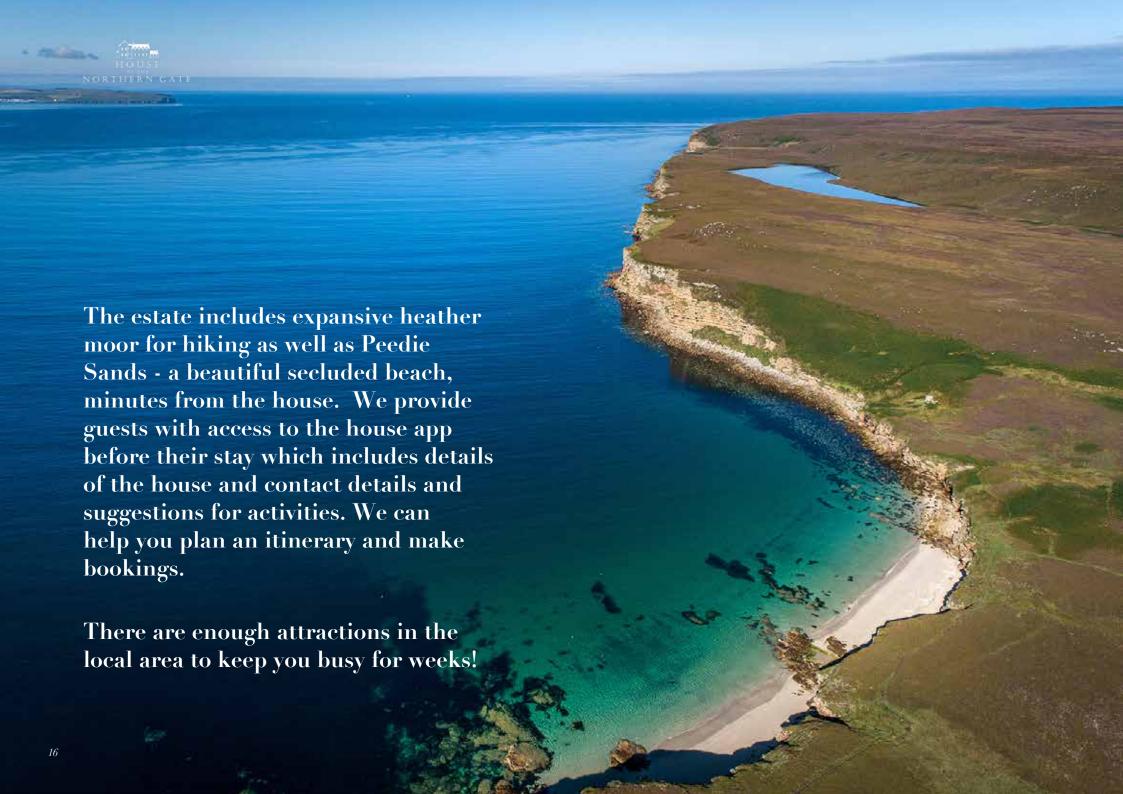


Downstairs Plan



Upstairs Plan

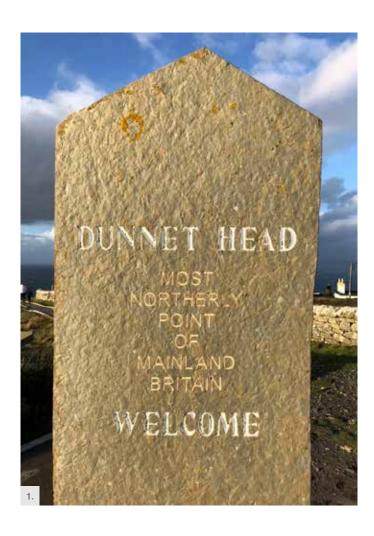
NB: Floor plans may not reflect exact furniture arrangement at any time





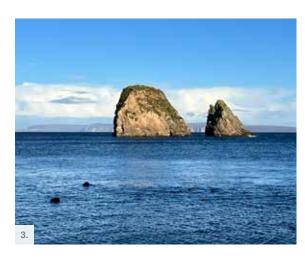
Activities At Dunnet Head

Dunnet Head is surrounded on three sides by the sea, each side having a very different feel. To the southwest is Dunnet Bay and Peedie Sands, perfect for playing in the sand and surfing. To the north are the dramatic waters of the Atlantic and the Pentland Firth where you can see puffins on the cliffs. To the east are the seals of Brough Harbour and opportunities for kayaking.









- Dunnet Head UK mainland's most northerly point with spectacular panoramic views
- 2. Peedie Sands estate beach near the house
- 3. Seals at Brough Harbour
- 4. Ornithology opportunities are close at hand with puffins and other species of coastal bird on the cliffs of Dunnet Head and around Caithness, including at St John's Loch in the village which has hides available



Activities Nearby

The Caithness coastline offers an array of day trip opportunities within twenty minutes of House of the Northern Gate, from a Royal caste to spectacular sea stacks and a natural sea pool. Nearer to home you can walk along Dunnet Bay or take cover in the enchanting Dunnet Forest









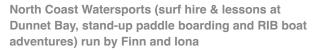
- 1. John O'Groats: Tourist village at the most north-easterly point of the UK (not the most northern, that's Dunnet Head). Ask us where to find elusive Groatie Buckie shells
- **2. Duncansby Stacks** a short way from John O'Groats and a spectacular walk
- **3. Castle Sinclair Girnigoe** explore this historic marvel steeped in clan history near Wick
- **4. Stroma**: A deserted Island. We can arrange a day trip boat over to the island for you to explore
- **5. Castle of Mey**: Bought by the Queen Mother in the 1950s while she was staying at House of the Northern Gate





Activities On the sea





Dunnet Bay is the one of the best places to learn to surf or to improve in the UK. The water is crystal clear and the waves are perfect for learning. Don't worry about the cold - you honestly don't feel it at all with a good wetsuit on.

Finn and Iona are a lovely couple, surfing champions and are great teachers. They offer equipment rental (boards, wetsuits, boots, gloves, hoods) as well as tuition.



Liquid Footprints offer canoeing, sea kayaking, mountain guiding, gorge scrambling, and family experiences

We have been canoeing in Brough harbour with them (and the seals) with our children and had an amazing time.



Caithness Sea Coast run power boat adventures from Wick harbour along the Caithness coast

From Wick harbour nearby, go on an exhilarating power boat adventure to see castles, sea stacks, caves, wildlife, lighthouses and offshore wind farms.



Activities Distilleries

Whisky lovers (and gin, vodka and rum lovers) can visit distilleries in the village (Rock Rose Gin at the Dunnet Bay Distillery), Thurso (Wolfburn) and Wick (Old Pulteney Distillery). On the drive up from Inverness, you can also find distilleries like Clynelish (Johnnie Walker) and Glenmorangie at Tain.









- Wolfburn distillery is in nearby Thurso, producing single malt Scotch whisky and offering tours and tastings
- 2. Dunnet Bay distillery in the village creates worldrenowned gin, vodka and rum using botanicals from Dunnet Head and offers distillery tours
- **3. Old Pulteney distillery** in the Pulteneytown area of Wick produces single malt whisky and offers tours
- **4. 8 Doors distillery** Scotland's most northerly mainland whisky distillery is at John O"Groats and opened in September 2022



Activities Golf













1. Royal Dornoch Golf Club

1.5hrs away and one of the best courses in the world. Royal Dornoch Golf Club has two 18-hole courses: the Championship Course and the Struie Course

2. Reay Golf Club

On the edge of Sandside Bay, Reay Golf Club is a classic 18-hole links course, offering amazing views over the Pentland Firth and North Atlantic

3. Thurso Golf Club

At 58.58 degrees north, Thurso Golf Club founded in 1893, is the most northerly golf course on UK mainland

4. Wick Golf Club

The oldest established club on the NC500 Wick Golf Club celebrated its 150th year in 2020

5. Brora Golf Club

The golf course design is recognised as being one of James Braid's finest pieces of work

6. Golspie Golf Club

A varied and challenging course with spectacular views to both sea and mountains



Activities

Shooting and Fishing









The Thurso is among the best salmon rivers in the north and is often coupled with the Helmsdale and Naver. It enjoys a long productive season, from 11th January to 5th October, and fish can be caught during every month. Currently the river fishes best from March to October with larger catches from July to the end of the season. On average the river produces around 2000 salmon per year and fishing is by fly only.

The sea angling off the Caithness and Orkney coastline is famous. There are charter boats available from Scrabster (15 min from the house) which we can help to arrange. The range of

species to be caught is good including cod, ling, pollock, flat fish, mackerel and other species readily available.

You can shoot grouse, pheasant, woodcock and snipe. These are not in as high numbers as elsewhere in Scotland and probably 'walked up' rather than driven. The smaller bags are more than made up for by the scenery and atmosphere of the area.

Clay pigeon shooting is possible to arrange.

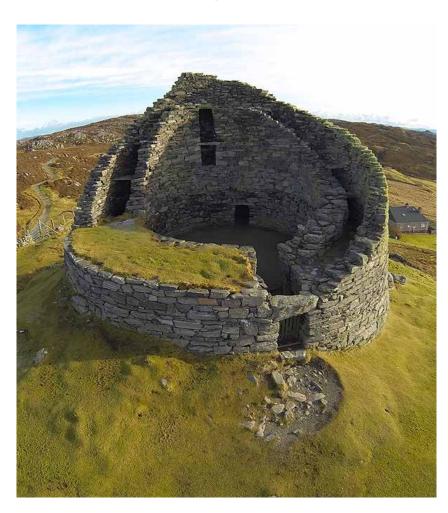
Stalking is available for both red and roe deer.

Contact us for advice.



Activities Archaeology and Tours

Archaeologists and tourists can explore the iron age brochs found in the region and take part in archaeology tours run by excellent local guides.



North Coast Explorer

North Coast Explorer Tours is a small family-run private tour business covering the North Coast 500 and its heartland - and is the only Visit Scotland 5-star rated private tour company located in the North Highlands. Robert and Sally-Ann give you the opportunity to head off the beaten path in a luxury 4x4 with captivating stories and a wealth of local knowledge. Welly boots and wet weather gear are provided for inclement moments.

Book here: www.northcoast.scot

Above and Beyond Tours

Isobel and Angela both have a passion for their home county of Caithness. They set up Above and Beyond Tours to share their local knowledge with visitors. They will take you to sights near House of the Northern Gate and entertain you with stories of growing up and living in the area.

Book here: www.aboveandbeyondtours.co.uk



Activities Museums and Cultural Attractions









- 1. Mary Ann's Cottage is a traditional Caithness crofter's cottage, a short walk from the house. It was built in 1850 and is named after Mary Ann Calder who lived in the cottage until she was 93. After her departure to a nursing home, it was preserved and opened to the public as a museum which captures life in a past era.
- 2. Castlehill Heritage Centre Across the bay from the house, Castletown is frequently referred to as the 'Flagstone Village'. Themed exhibitions are held throughout the year featuring the history, heritage, biodiversity and social history of Castletown and the surrounding area.
- 3. North Coast Visitor Centre is a museum in Thurso.
 The museum features exhibits that tell the story of the
 Caithness from the geological period known as the
 Devonian (about 416 to 359 million years ago) to the
 present day including ancient Pictish artefacts.
- 4. Lyth Arts Centre (LAC) has a programme of live performance across Caithness alongside contemporary visual art and an extensive participatory programme of arts projects led by local creatives in our community.



Activities

Day trips along the North Coast 500 and to Orkney





- The house is on the North Coast 500 driving route - called "maybe the best road trip in the world" by Conde Nast due to the incredible Highlands scenery. The house makes a perfect base to explore from.
- 2. Orkney is an amazing trip with history from UNESCO world heritage neolithic settlements such as Skara Brae to modern history. It is possible to visit in a day and return to the house in the evening with the Gills Bay ferry which is a 15 minute drive away and a 45 minute crossing.



Activities

Nature, Hiking and Mountain Biking







(1) The Flow Country is a vast peat bog that covers much of Caithness in the north of Scotland and was awarded UNESCO world heritage status in 2024. it hosts a diverse range of plants and wildlife. Forsinard Flows has a good visitor centre.

Discover the historic harbour and **Whaligoe steps (2)**, located near Wick. For those seeking more strenuous adventures, consider ascending **Ben Hope or Ben Loyal (3)** to the west or conquering the steep-sided conical peak of **Morven (4)** to the south - the highest point in Caithness.

The nearest hub for mountain biking is **Golspie (5)** with many scenic routes to explore.





Activities At the house



Huddle around and tell stories and roast marshmallows over the **fire pit** in the house's walled garden.



In winter, the **Northern Lights** are often visible from the house - use the AuroraWatch app to get notifications and head out to look for them on the northern horizon.



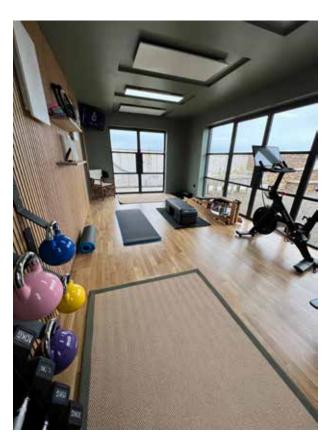
Arrangements can be made to have private chefs cater meals during your stay.



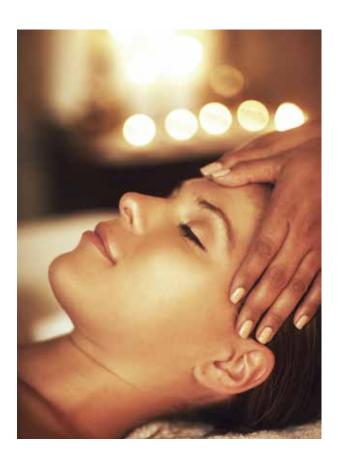
Activities At the house



Table tennis in the boot room



Gym with Peloton, rower, weights and other equipment



Spa treatments can be arranged















We have nine very comfortable bedrooms, all with excellent views. Seven have en-suite bathrooms and two smaller rooms share a bathroom. Some can be converted from double to twin if required and we can also set up a ground-floor room as an accessible bedroom with an accessible bathroom nearby if needed.







Bushta

Named after Loch Bushta, a half an hour walk north of the house on the estate. This is a king room with a four-poster bed, an en-suite bathroom with bath and separate shower in the turret, and stunning views to Peedie Sands beach and the Atlantic. This is the room the Queen Mother stayed in when visiting the house in the 1950's.





Mey

Named after the Castle of Mey (to the east of the estate where King Charles takes a retreat every summer) which was purchased by the Queen Mother when staying at the house. This is a superking or a large twin room with an en-suite bath with shower.





Morven

Named after Morven, the highest point in Caithness with a steep-sided conical peak and amazing views from the summit. This is a superking room with an en-suite shower room.







Olrig

Named after Olrig Hill on the other side of Dunnet Bay. This is a double room with an en-suite shower room.





Dwarwick

Named after the headland on which the house is situated. It has wonderful views of the beach at Dunnet Bay. This is a superking room with an en-suite bathroom (with hand held shower over the bath).





Holborn

Named after Holborn Head to the north of Scrabster Harbour which is visible to the west out of the window. This is a king room with an en-suite shower room.







Hoy

Named after the Old Man of Hoy (a coastal stack) on Orkney which can be seen from Dunnet Head on a clear day. This is a king room with an en-suite shower room.





St John's

Named after the large loch in the centre of Dunnet, visible south-eastwards out of the window. This is a king room or a twin room sharing a bathroom with Stroma.





Stroma

Named after the now uninhabited island of Stroma, visible eastwards out of the window. This is a king or a small twin room sharing a bathroom with St John's.















The house has incredible views in all directions and has been the scene for magical weddings, unique photo shoots, feature films and memorable Christmas and Hogmanay celebrations. The house and grounds are fenced off from the surrounding estate for privacy and there are electronic gates and cameras for security.





Royal Recognition

In 2021, at the completion of renovation works, we were honoured by a visit of His Majesty the King (HRH Prince Charles as he then was) who toured the house and met almost all of the local craftsmen who had worked on the house.



Artistic House Heritage



The house is full of art gathered over the generations from family living abroad and from artists at home. Each room has a very different set of pictures - each with its own history and story.

This painting in the dining room is by artist Alex Williams and portrays a stylised view of a stormy sea battering the cliffs and nesting puffins of Dunnet Head.





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