

INIGO



High Haven

LAMBSTON, PEMBROKESHIRE

£400,000 FREEHOLD

Tucked along the mesmerising mid Pembrokeshire coastline, this Grade II-listed church has been carefully converted into a sympathetic seaside house. The interiors unfold around an exquisite Romanesque oolite font beneath an evocative, early Gothic archway, with the exposed beams of a later 19th-century Arts and Crafts roof lending an airy feel. Outside, a beautifully maintained garden is set against a backdrop of countryside and the sea beyond.

Setting the Scene

First mentioned in 1291, the site has evidence of earlier Celtic, possibly pre-Christian significance. Originally called St Ismael's after the sixth-century Welsh saint, the church was a subsidiary of the nearby Haverford Augustinian Priory. Restorations through the 18th and 19th centuries were relatively restrained, and the house maintains a high level of original early details such as the medieval cusped lancet window.

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Constructed in limestone rubble of a simple two-cell layout, the structure was carefully reworked by the owners Charlotte Boyens and Adam Scott, founders of the architecture practice, FreeState. With staggering sensitivity to the style and use of historic features, the house maintains references to original orientations around the font, altar, and windows. For more information, please see the History section.

The Grand Tour

A timber door within the original south entrance opens to a hall laid with Welsh flagstones and fitted with a cast-iron radiator. Here, a neat boot room has plenty of space for kicking off muddy boots or depositing sandy pails. Beyond is a convenient shower room with a WC, as well as a large walk-in store.

The living space congregates around an elegant Stuv wood-burning stove, with its striking iron chimney rising through the chapel. The space is opened up on both sides by arched and cusped stone mullion windows set behind thick niches, offering a sweet nook for children to curl up with a book.

The open-plan living area and kitchen/dining space is divided by an early Gothic archway above a scalloped Romanesque font on a square plinth, now used as a spectacular receptacle for flowers or candles. Stone walls undulate under crisp white lime plaster throughout. The kitchen and dining spaces are illuminated by the dramatic stone mullion three-light trefoil windows, sustaining a divine flow of light from the fore. Here, the church's antique oak altar has been ingeniously repurposed as a kitchen countertop, evocative of the original altar table position.

Ascending the stairs, a mezzanine gallery overlooks the space below with two bedrooms set beneath the arched eaves. In both rooms, conservation rooflights from Lumen with piston openers frame seemingly endless views of rolling countryside whilst providing a means of escape. The area in between the bedrooms is brilliantly open-plan and ideal for use as an office or as a cosy snug, with struts beneath the eaves ingeniously used as bookshelving. Fold-out beds placed here would add particularly atmospheric sleeping space for guests.

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Tucked under the stairs, a large second bathroom has a chic, modern finish, with a bathtub well-placed beneath a medieval window. There is also a handy utility laundry room with concealed, integrated appliances.

The Great Outdoors

Set within an original churchyard, High Haven is surrounded by a lawn with ample space for a firepit and outdoor seating. Raised at the head of the valley, the garden has spectacular views of the rolling countryside and Preseli Hills beyond. Mature shrubs and trees dot the plot with a colossal pine tree taking pride of place. In keeping with its ecclesiastical past, gravestones mingle amongst small yews and vernacular planting in the deconsecrated plot. The working 1807 chapel bell sits above the house and resounds in the sea air.

Out and About

The house is within short driving distance of Britain's most idyllic beaches: Druidstone Haven, Nolton Haven, Broad Haven, Little Haven and Newgale are within easy reach and are renowned for swimming, surfing, kite surfing and dog walking.

Just an 8-minute drive from the house, the Druidstone Hotel has something of a legendary following. Perched over St Bride's Bay within the Pembrokeshire National Park, it's known for its Celtic Bohemian charm, with hotel and cottage accommodation, and live music, and has been running themed Feast Nights every Thursday since the 1970s. The gorgeous little market town of Narbeth is a 25-minute drive, famous for its eclectic mix of unique and high-quality offerings in its many lovely shops, eateries and galleries.

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The majestic Preseli Hills stretch from east to west. A range of wild moorland, heath and grassland, the peaks are home to a huge range of rare plants and animals, and an ideal location for extended walks. Recent archaeological surveys have shown that the stones of the famous Stonehenge not only came from the Preseli Hills, but was also likely erected as a monument in Wales before its mysterious removal to Wiltshire. These hills are steeped in myth and legend, home to tales of King Arthur and the Mabinogion; from the gateway to the fairy world at Ffynone waterfall to the Golden Road, which tracks an ancient route along the spine of the mountains used since the neolithic period as the main route to and from Ireland. This gently undulating route, with views out towards Ireland, deep into South Wales, and north up the arc of Cardigan Bay towards the peaks of Eryri (Snowdonia) National Park, links ancient monuments and burial places, cairns and rocky tors.

Bordering the hills, the deep Gwaun Valley is known for a slower pace of life, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the tranquillity of nature, where Bessie's Dyffryn Arms pub still pours Bass bitter from a jug. For the brave or neoprene-clad, Rosebush Quarry is an opportunity for an inland swim in icy blue waters; warmth and local ales can then be found at the community-run Tafarn Sinc.

Haverfordwest is a 10-minute drive away, with a wide array of shops and amenities as well as a well-served train station with regular services to London Paddington, Bristol, Manchester and Birmingham.

Council Tax Band: E

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About

Inigo is an estate agency that specialises in selling marvellous historic homes, believing that a beautiful home is a pleasure that never ages. We connect discerning individuals with extraordinary spaces, no matter the price or provenance. Covering urban and rural locations across Britain, our team combines proven experience selling distinctive homes with design and architectural expertise.