

INIGO



Mapstone Hill

LUSTLEIGH, DEVON

SOLD

Set on the eastern fringes of the Dartmoor National Park, Mapstone Hill forms part of a Grade I-listed early-Medieval manor. Unfolding across 2,700 sq ft, the main house is a patchwork of history, having been altered and extended over 700 years. Its 14th-century bones blend with Victorian joinery and mid-century Crittall windows to create a home that is a potted account of British architecture. A later 19th-century coach house, currently used as a holiday let, has two further bedrooms; there is also a Grade II-listed tithe barn. Nestled in wonderful gardens, these grounds have elevated views towards Lustleigh Cleave and Hunters Tor. The house is close to the popular local market towns of Ashburton and Bovey Tracey, while the spectacular South Hams coastline and rugged north Cornish beaches are also easily accessible.

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Setting the Scene

Sir William le Prouz, whose effigy lies in Lustleigh church at the foot of Mapstone Hill, instigated the construction of the original manor house in the late 13th century, and its cross-wing and neighbouring Great Hall are two of the oldest surviving domestic timber frames in the South-West. Nicolaus Pevsner detailed the building's description in the Devon edition of his Buildings of England architectural guide.

By the 15th century, the manor had passed into the hands of the Wadham family, best known as the founders of Wadham College, Oxford. It served as the village Rectory between the 17th and 19th centuries, during which time the property continued to grow in size. The manor was subdivided in the mid-twentieth century – the current owners have carefully restored and sensitively developed the building over the last 15 years. For more information, please see the History section.

The Grand Tour

The original Medieval heart to the house, punctuated by arched windows, is now painted in a mustard yellow, whilst the Victorian addition is constructed from granite inset with casement windows. The house extends over three floors, its main entrance at the upper ground level. This leads directly to an open-plan kitchen and dining room housed in the Victorian range of the building. Sunny yellow walls create a welcoming atmosphere, accented by white timber matchboarding and cabinetry; a cast-iron woodburner warms the room. An elegant gothic arched window with leaded glass and wooden shutters is on the south wall. This combines with a window overlooking the courtyard that captures the late-afternoon sun and French doors to create a brilliantly bright space.

The sitting room occupies the upper storey of the medieval cross-wing, or 'Solar', its history immediately evident in its grand proportions and architectural detail. The room has a spectacular Medieval oak vaulted frame, that draws the eye to the top of the room.

Next door is the main bedroom, where expansive mid-century Crittall windows wrap two sides of the room. These create a tranquil space due to their view onto the walled gardens and the tree canopies, creating a real sense of communication with nature.

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On the first floor, there are a further three bedrooms. Two of these look onto the garden and distant woodland, with one in the gabled roof space of a recent extension – a pretty French window has a Juliet balcony. The second is currently used as an artist's studio due to its double-width Crittall dormer window that floods the room with light. A small flight of steps in this room lead to a nook that can be used for storage or as a mezzanine bed platform. Bathrooms are situated across these two floors, one with a bath inset into sunny yellow-painted wood.

The lower-ground floor has its own entrance, a second kitchen, a living space and a bedroom, allowing it to be used as a self-contained living space. Flagstones run underfoot in the entrance hall and lead directly to the kitchen, which retains much of its original Victorian joinery. The bedroom is fully lined in white wooden matchboarding, creating a light and airy atmosphere. An en suite shower room is tucked next door to a chimney breast. The sitting room on this floor is also situated in the medieval cross-wing. It features a substantial granite fireplace, pitch pine parquet flooring and an 18th-century window with its original shutters. At the rear, a small ante-room has historic flagstones and the remains of a magnificent medieval timber post and tapered bracket.

The mid-19th-century coach house, covered in a beautiful mature Virginia creeper, is Grade II-listed. A central doorway opens into the former horse stalls, currently a games room with its original cobbles. The former tack room now serves as an entrance lobby and boot room, while a cart bay has been converted into an office. The first floor has been converted into living accommodation, used as a holiday let apartment for the last five years. Here, in the open-plan living and dining area, the granite walls and original Victorian timber frame have been left exposed. Two bedrooms, one at either end of the plan, and a large bathroom complete this floor. A separate 18th-century tithe barn is also Grade II-listed and offers a vast vaulted space. This could be used as a games room, a workshop or as covered parking.

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The Great Outdoors

A 17th-century walled garden extending to half an acre contains an ancient pear tree, mature evergreen oak, holly, and numerous younger oak, apple, fruit and cherry trees. The southwesterly aspect captures all day sun. As the former kitchen garden of the Manor House, the soil is richly fertile from centuries of produce growing and is teeming with wildlife and flowers. The space slopes upwards and enjoys spectacular views of the surrounding hills and fields, and is part-terraced on numerous levels with a small stone outbuilding built into the top corner of the wall. The coach house discretely retains its own separate garden.

Out and About

Mapstone Hill is located just above the charming village of Lustleigh, on one of the principal routes that lead into the heart of the Dartmoor National Park in the Wrey Valley. The local area is characterised by its extensive walks and expansive views across the landscape. Lustleigh is often described as one of the prettiest villages on Dartmoor, with beautiful thatched cottages and winding lanes. St. John's church and The Cleave, a popular pub set in a 15th-century thatched building, are at the heart of the village. There is also a well-stocked general store and post office known as The Dairy, a tea room, a village hall, a preschool and a community orchard with a playground.

Within a 15-minute drive are the local market towns of Bovey Tracey and Moretonhampstead for daily essentials. With its antique shops, cafes, artisan bakery and award-winning fishmongers, Ashburton is also close at hand. Historic market towns of Chagford and Totnes are a 20 and 40-minute drive, respectively, both with a range of independent shops, stores and markets. There are many well-regarded restaurants in the area – including The Horse in Moretonhampstead for wood-fired pizza, Rafikis in Ashburton for great coffee and vegan food, award-winning organic pub and dining room The Bull Inn in Totnes and the much-loved Riverford Field Kitchen.

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Despite its rural setting, Mapstone Hill is readily reached by road and rail. The A38, also known as the Devon Expressway, is a short drive away and provides rapid access to Exeter in addition to connecting to the A30 and the M5. Newton Abbot is situated on the Great Western railway offering access to London Paddington with a journey time of just over two and a half hours, calling at Reading, Taunton and Exeter. There is also a regular service to Bristol.

Council Tax Band: F

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About

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