

INIGO



Passage Road

AUST, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

SOLD

This beautiful 19th-century former vicarage lies in an elevated position on the banks of the River Severn on the edge of the hamlet of Aust. The five-bedroom house has recently undergone an extensive and highly sensitive programme of restoration works, and the level of detail, love and attention invested is remarkable. Accommodation extends to over 4,000 sq ft in total, with circa 3,400 sq ft of accommodation in the main house across three storeys; there is an additional, self-contained coach house, as well as other outbuildings. The house is set in over two acres, including a herb garden designed and planted by Jekka McVicar, an orchard, wildflower meadow and an avenue of over thirty Madame Hardy rose bushes. Delightfully rural and exceptionally peaceful, it is, conversely, under half an hour's drive to central Bristol.

We've written about life here in more depth.

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Setting the Scene

Approach to the house is down a quiet road, where tall wooden gates shield the house from view. These open to reveal an elegant sweeping driveway leading to the side of the house and the breath-taking gardens. A curved path bordered by naturalistic planting leads to the front door.

The house combines the local vernacular with more formal, classical architectural sensibilities. Constructed from dressed Pennant Stone, it is three bays across with large, 16-pane sash windows over the two principal storeys and two 12-pane sashes set into the gables creating a harmonious order and symmetry. Mature wisteria, roses, jasmine, passionflower, musk scented roses and honeysuckle climb the house, creating an enchanting first impression. The classical, panelled central front door has a transom window set under a pediment. For more information, please see the History section.

The Grand Tour

The main entrance opens to a generously proportioned hall extending the length of the house. Large Welsh flagstones run underfoot, and walls are painted in contrasting shades; a charcoal on the bottom and soft stone white on top. Dentil corning throughout the principal rooms adds a sense of cohesion and formality.

These main rooms flank the central hallway and are partitioned by heavy natural linen curtains, handmade by Melanie Sauzé that match the paint scheme of each space. To the right is the drawing-room, painted in indigo blue. This space is made especially inviting and cosy by an original working, open fireplace with classical swag detailing and bespoke fitted bookshelves in the chimney alcoves.

The kitchen has traditional 'Spitalfields' cabinetry by Plain English, finished in a neutral shirting white and topped with a Carrara marble work surface; it is complemented by raw-brass hardware. Bespoke panelling with a glazed door painted a contrasting rusty nail orange leads to a large pantry. An electric Aga is set into the alcove of the original kitchen range, which is finished in Delft tiles; some Dutch antique and reproductions made by Douglas Watson studios depicting the house and gardens.

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The study/library on this floor is painted a moss green and has sisal carpet. It is fully lined with bookshelves, finished with bolection-moulded corning and panel work. To the left of the hall is the dining room. Finished in a warm rust-orange, is it well proportioned—an original fireplace with dentil detailing acts as a focal point to the room.

At the back of the dining room is a guest WC and boot room, and beyond, spacious scullery/utility room and a double garage. Walls in the utility, like the hallways, are painted in two colours; sand on the bottom two-thirds and stone white on the top third. Cabinetry by Suffolk interiors is finished in the same sandy hue as the walls and is lined in tongue and groove panelling; a door leads onto the garden.

The first floor is accessed by a U-shaped staircase. Here, there are the main four bedrooms and a family bathroom. The primary guest bedroom is finished with a beautiful William Morris, Willow Bough Minor wallpaper. There is a stand-alone slipper bath in a deep obsidian green lacquered alcove of the room, other en suite amenities are cleverly hidden behind cabinetry.

The main and third bedrooms are finished in neutral colour palettes, while the smallest bedroom maximises the space through the use of a whimsical double bed set in a bespoke nook designed and built by Kelmscott studios, providing an enchanting, fairy-tale quality. The bathroom by the Water Monopoly has a large, freestanding rolltop bath in the middle of the room; a shower alcove is lined with Delft-inspired tiles, referencing nautical themes. French, raw brass, vintage hardware and ceramic were painstakingly sourced. A winding staircase leads to the third floor with two attic rooms.

A door from the study leads down to the large basement, currently used as a music room. This is tanked with large double doors opening onto the garden.

The former coach house is across a courtyard from the house. It has a large, double-height living space with a sleeping mezzanine, a kitchenette and a bathroom. Warmth is provided by independent central heating. Additionally, the former potting sheds have been converted and are currently used as a workshop. Insulated and with a well-finished bathroom, this formerly served as further accommodation.

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The Great Outdoors

The current owners have extensively remodelled the gardens under the current ownership. Jekka McVicar's primary focus was on the herb garden immediately adjacent to the house, which fills the house with sublime scents in the summer.

Beyond the herb garden is a kitchen garden with mature raised vegetable beds and a fruit cage with raspberry, blueberry, blackberry, blackcurrant, redcurrant, white currant, loganberry, gooseberry and strawberry bushes. The garden provides more fruit in the orchard with mulberry, pear, cherry, apple, greengage, fig, quince and apricot trees.

Next to the kitchen garden is the greenhouse, currently cultivating tomatoes, aubergine, cucumber and chilli, to name a few. Further planting around the garden includes lavender, hollyhocks, honeysuckle, jasmine, sweet peas, sunflowers and nasturtium, along with Holly, oak, ash, chestnut and horse chestnut, false pear, willow, elm, lime and pine trees.

Two large stone pillars topped with ball finials at the front of the house mark the gateway to a large wildflower meadow with sweeping pathways. About an acre in size, the field is divided by an avenue of white Madame Hardy rose bushes.

Out and About

Aust is a quiet hamlet with a pub and strong links to the neighbouring villages of Olveston and Tockington. Olveston has a butcher, church and two popular pubs that are very well located, with easy access to the M4 and M5. It is a half-hour drive from the heart of Bristol and 5-minutes across the Severn to Chepstow. Bristol is one of the UK's most vibrant cities thanks to its strong cultural life, great shopping opportunities and the natural beauty of the surrounding areas. The UNESCO World Heritage city of Bath is 45 minutes by car. The Cotswolds are half an hour away, as is the deeper West Country to the southwest.

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There is a tremendous amount of exceptionally good state and private schooling, including but not limited to Olveston primary school (a school bus passes by the house), Bristol Cathedral Choir School and Redland Green School as primary and secondary state options. The Downs and Badminton junior School for prep. Tockington Manor, Clifton Collage, Millfield, Cheltenham Ladies College and further afield, Sherborne and Bryanston as private options.

Bristol Parkway is a 20-minute drive from the house, with trains to London taking one hour and 15 minutes. Severn Beach train station is an eight-minute drive, with regular services to Bristol Temple Meads, which runs services to London in approximately one hour and 45 minutes. Bristol also has a busy international airport which is a 40-minute drive from the house.

Council Tax Band: G

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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.