

PRESS RELEASE

EMBRACING A WORLD OF CASHMERE - STOBO CASTLE HEALTH SPA UNVEILS THE MOST OPULENT AND LUXURIOUS BEDROOM IN THE LAND.

The much-anticipated 'Cashmere Suite' will be unveiled this week at Scotland's foremost and award winning health spa, Stobo Castle. The suite, which has already attracted the attention of media and celebrities across the world, has been hailed as the ultimate luxury in guest accommodation in Scotland.

With a build and design budget of £350,000, it is without doubt the most expensive and opulent bedroom in the land, not forgetting the incredible contribution the castle has made in support of one of Scotland's oldest industries. Indeed, the concept has already attracted the attention of one of Scotland's most prestigious tourist awards, 'The Scottish Enterprise Tourism Innovation and Development Awards', where the Cashmere Suite was granted the maximum allowance as a finalist and winner.

The Cashmere Suite is Managing Director Stephen Winyard's latest step in his master plan, after the September 2003 launch of the £5 million new spa facility. With the addition of 40 luxury treatment rooms, 7 new bedrooms and Scotland's only 25m ozone-pool, to name but a few features, the spa extends its already envied reputation as one of the leading spas in Europe.

'Opulence is the key theme here,' states Stephen Winyard. 'The idea arose to refurbish the former pool area with a unique and highly innovative concept in guest accommodation. The room represents unadulterated luxury, utilising one of Scotland's international and most successful products,' Stephen explained.

The bedroom walls are dressed in rich claret coloured cashmere, sourced from Holland & Sherry in Peebles, while the living room boasts walls covered in camel coloured cashmere. An abundance of silk compliments the cashmere with the most appropriate and superior lighting technology available on the market place. Integrated 'his and her' plasma screen televisions are placed at the bottom of two cashmere covered 7x5 ft beds from Italy which are hand painted and detailed to reflect the design of the silk curtains in the living room.

Lizzie Bell, a top Scottish Interior Designer from Edinburgh comments: "As a company we work with fabrics day in day out, but one fabric stands head and shoulders above the others, Cashmere. You always remember that soft, warm, sensual texture, the ultimate in opulence. This special suite could only therefore be called the Cashmere Suite. To complement this feeling of luxury we have brought together superb silks, wool and fabulous lacquer."

The living room floor boasts a truly stunning Zeigler rug that embraces all the colours of the suite and covers most of the room. On the walls hang paintings by Scottish based artist Deirdre Edwards - taken from her exhibition in the Scottish Gallery. The artwork, which features portraits set in a Chinese landscape, exhibits a style that is felt to be a break away from the traditional Scottish landscapes, which one expects in such situations.

The bathroom within the Cashmere Suite is a true haven in itself. Handcrafted from one piece of limestone and weighing over a ton, is a breathtaking cream bath, which is the focal point of the room. Amber and aubergine up-lighters illuminate the room and complement the colour scheme. With under-floor heating and an integrated flat screen television, there are no bathroom details excluded.

Modestly priced at less than £500 per night for 2 people including all meals and treatments, the Cashmere Suite has set an unprecedented and competitive standard in Scotland, allowing a wide audience to indulge in the ultimate luxury. Stephen Winyard, who has over 25 years experience in the health and leisure industry, feels that such a pricing strategy will be a key component to the suite's success.

Stephen added; "Essentially, we have taken a product that is synonymous with the world of luxury and yet a product that is associated with the Scottish Borders as a region and traditional borders industry. We believe that Cashmere will not only be associated with the fashion industry but interior decoration as well, and what a better location than in the heart of the Borders".

With top Scottish actor Gerry Butler paying £5000 for a weekend in the Cashmere Suite at the recent Ewan McGregor charity Burns supper, there is no escaping the demand already in place. With many weekends already fully booked in 2004, without as much as a peep inside, the best advice would be to get on that phone!

ENDS 2004

EDITORS NOTES:

1 MATERIALS & SUPPLIERS

Cashmere - Holland & Sherry, Peebles, Scotland

Paintings - Deirdre Edwards, Scottish Gallery

Zeigler Rug - C&L Rose, Edinburgh, Scotland

Bathroom (Limestone) - Stonecraft, Edinburgh, Scotland

Curtains - Zimmer & Rhode

Lamps - Lucy Vaughan, London

Stools - Clockhouse Furniture, East Lothian

• **GADGETERY** - Poleron

- 2 x flat screen televisions in the bedroom
- 1 x 42'' Plasma television in the living room
- 1 x 17'' Flat screen in the bathroom
- 2 x DVD players (in Bookcase in Sitting Room)
- 1 x Mini Bar (in Bookcase in Sitting Room)
- 1 x Fridge (in Bookcase in Sitting Room)
- 1 x Control panel allowing for twenty different light settings

• **IMAGERY**; We have a selection of exclusive model imagery at the castle. The shots feature the Cashmere Suite, new spa development and a top Scottish model - Lauren Tempany. There are also shots featuring an exclusive Aston Martin DB5 fully restored classic car that was transported to Peeblesshire exclusively for the shoot.

• **CELEBRITY GUESTS**; Guests that have stayed at the castle include Joan Collins, Shirley Bassey, Carole Smillie, Midge Ure and Jenni Falconer. Guests for the launch party included a host of Scottish industrialists, MSP's, Sarah Heaney, John Amabile, Anna Ryder Richardson, Stephan Dennis, Ally McCoist etc.

• **CASHMERE SUITE CELEBRITY GUESTS**. Due to the privacy that Stobo bestows upon its high profile guests, celebrity guests who have stayed in the Suite will only be released after the stay. For up to date details please contact TFF.

NEW EXTENSION NOTES:

It took less than a year in 2003 to complete the £5 million extension to Scotland's most successful and indeed exclusive spa resort at Stobo Castle, Peeblesshire. With phase 1 being unveiled last autumn, customers were spoiled for choice in the 2500 sq. ft extension, which included the showpiece 25-mtr ozone pool (the only one of its kind in Scotland).

With the addition of 40 luxury treatment rooms, new air conditioned aerobics/dance studios, Ice Fountain, Aromatic Steam Room, new Hydraspa and new Laconium, new snail showers and a new Rasul mud room, the spa extended it's already envied reputation as one of the leading spa's in Europe.

With such expansion came new jobs - an immediate 40 new staff were added to the spa increasing their employee numbers to around 160.

FINANCIAL NOTES:

The business grew at a rate of £500,000 per year in 2002 with 5000 day visitors paying an average of £150 per head per visit, which more than justifies Winyards intentions to maximise this sector of income for the spa.

With a turnover of £4 million in 2003 and an expected turnover of at least £5 million in 2004 the company is on track to reach the mark.

AWARDS / NOTES OF ACHEIVEMENT

- 2001 & 2002 Health Spa of the Year - Professional Beauty Awards
- 2002 - Health Spa of the Year - British Beauty Awards

- 2003 - Darphin Spa of the Year
- 2003 - Harpers and Queen - included in the 'Top 100 Greatest Escapes in the World' . Stobo was indeed the only spa in the UK to be included in this prestigious travel list.

HISTORY

- Completed in 1811 for Sir James Montgomery, the Lord Chief Baron, Stobo Castle was the home to the family for nearly 100 years. The last resident of the castle was the Countess of Dysart who lived there until the mid 1960's.
- Acquired by the Winyard family in 1975, 2 years were spent transforming the castle into a luxury health spa keeping the elegant style and enhancing the baronial architecture that the castle boasts.
- Since 1978, over 40,000 guests from all over the world have indulged in the Stobo experience.
- A choice of over 70 health and beauty treatments guarantees that every desire is fulfilled.
- 2000 saw the launch of Park Lodge within the castle grounds. A self-contained unit, which was converted to provide luxury accommodation for up to 12 guests, has allowed the castle to tap into 'corporate retreats' or 'hen den' sectors. It's quite simply, the only location in Scotland for the ultimate 'hen weekend'. The new spa also includes a covered walkway, which links Park Lodge to main building.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT JENNI WATTS AT STOBO CASTLE ON T:01721 725305 OR jenni@stobocastle.co.uk