

## Property Mail

# High-end timeshare venture where the outlook is sunny

Highland getaway: The Mains of Taymouth holiday complex is set among some of Perthshire's most stunning scenery



by Jenny Shields

## A WISE BUY ... Couple's delight at bagging 'perfect' home

IT'S a funny old time in the property market. Falling house prices, the lack of finance and a surge in the rented sector could all conspire to make things very difficult for developers.

Yet a family concern in Perthshire is confident that its high-end holiday homes will still sell, even in these uncertain times.

At Kenmore, in the heart of Perthshire – and just a short distance from JK Rowling's country pile – is the 120-acre Mains of Taymouth estate where the Menzies family have been successfully running self-catering holiday cottages for a generation.

Work is now well under way to complete a village of timeshare and buy-to-let houses and apartments at the mouth of Loch Tay. The site is flanked by the Tay Forest Park, which is known for its walks and mountain bike trails.

Despite the chaos in the property market, the mood here is upbeat, thanks, in part, to the rise in domestic holidays prompted by the credit crunch and the soaring value of the euro and the dollar, which make travelling to the Continent and the U.S. so much more expensive.

The unspoilt village of Kenmore – which can be reached in a couple of hours from Glasgow and is only 90 minutes from the capital – was chosen by Queen Victoria as her honeymoon destination and it remains a desirable location today.

HEATHER and Barry Milligan had been holidaying in this part of Perthshire for years, enjoying the fact that they could get there from their home in Dunfermline, Fife, in just over an hour.

'The minute we cross the bridge and drive into Kenmore we start to relax, it's as simple as that,' said Mrs Milligan, a secondary school teacher.

They weren't looking for a place to buy but intrigued by the Mains of Taymouth development, Mr Milligan strolled over one afternoon for a look. 'He was so bowled over by what he saw, he came and got me,' his wife recalls.

After viewing a two-bedroom ground-floor apartment, they decided it would be a great holiday home – and a shrewd investment. The couple have paid £275,000 for the fully furnished home and can expect it to be let between 30 and 40 weeks of the year. For the first two years they are guaranteed a return of 7 per cent per annum.

Mr Milligan, who works in IT, said: 'As we are so close, we could decide, if a week hasn't been booked, just to pop up for a few days – it's perfect.'



Estate owner Robin Menzies said: 'We are very excited about what is currently happening here. This glorious area has so much potential and it has been a joy to take our business forward and create a special holiday haven which lives up to expectations.'

He added that he had noticed a growing demand for holiday homes, especially in the top-end self-catering market.

The Menzies converted the old

farm courtyard buildings years ago and recently completed Castle Gardens, a stunning new development by Aberfeldy architect McKenzie Strickland. Specialist firm Blairish Restorations is also involved in the new timeshare properties.

The watchword of all the work is attention to detail and luxury, so the properties feature underfloor heating, large bathrooms, private hot tubs and even saunas. Some of

the houses have double-height cathedral ceilings and they are furnished – under the stylish eye of Mr Menzies's wife Irena – in a restrained, timeless style.

Huge leather sofas, tweed curtains and quilted bed throws are some of the touches that make these properties that bit special.

But in this climate, is it enough? Will buyers decide to invest, either in a timeshare – where prices start from just under £8,000 for a week

for the next 55 years – or to take the plunge and buy a home outright?

A wise investor knows Scotland is seldom a destination for lazing in the sunshine, so it's important that there are on-site facilities.

Mains of Taymouth already has a nine-hole golf course, trekking stables, bar, restaurant and delicatessen. By next summer a swimming pool and spa complex should also be ready.

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