

# Harburn House, West Lothian

This beautiful Georgian home is set in 3,000 acres of scenic woodlands and lochs but is only half an hour's drive from the culture and sights of Edinburgh



## HARBURN HOUSE *at a glance*

Rozi Spurway  
Harburn, West Calder, West Lothian,  
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01506 461818, [www.harburnhouse.com](http://www.harburnhouse.com)



**Sleeps:** 16-40. Up to 16 in eight rooms in the house (four doubles, four double/twins) all ensuite or with private bathrooms. Another 24 in three lodges (for ten, nine and five).

**Dining:** 18 can sit around a single table, up to 40 at several tables. Harburn can be rented on a catered or self-catered basis. Three- to five-course meals cost from £40-£55pp and might include steamed scallops with asparagus and lemongrass butter sauce, roast loin of pork Normandy style and Harburn Scotch trifle. Wine is available at retail rates or £6pp corkage.

**Other facilities:** billiards, rowing boats on the loch, tennis court (not in great condition).

**Children:** cots, highchairs and a buggy.

**Wedding licence:** for up to 80, more in a marquee. Facility fee of £4,000 for the estate for a weekend, plus dinner for £45pp, excluding wine.

**Local attractions/things to do:** shooting, walking, fishing, archery, rowing on the estate's loch and championship golf courses nearby. Edinburgh is 17 miles away and there are historic sites within an hour's drive, including Linlithgow Palace, birthplace of Mary Queen of Scots, and restored cotton mill town, New Lanark.

**Transport:** Edinburgh is half an hour away; transfers can be arranged (£30 a car).

**Price:** from £2,500 plus VAT per day on a full-board basis for the house or £10,000 plus VAT per week self catering for the whole estate sleeping 40.

**Note:** cleaning can be arranged for self-catering lets at £7.50 per hour.

The beauty of Harburn is the flexibility you get when you hire it. One of the few properties of this calibre that can be booked on either a catered or a self-catering basis, this creeper-clad Georgian house can be taken over completely, giving you the run of the commercial kitchen, should you so choose (though you won't get the chef's knives – he makes a point of locking them up).

And if having the house to yourselves isn't enough (it sleeps 16), you can take the whole estate, with three lodges sleeping another 24 set among 3,000 acres of scenic woodlands and lochs. There's room for 40 people to eat together in the main house's dining room, which because Harburn is built on sloping land, you reach by going downstairs, though the room still enjoys views over the grounds.

Lit by candles and a glowing fire at night, this room with its large table is a pleasant place to sit, either devouring your own gastronomic creation, or a five-course meal concocted from locally

sourced, fresh ingredients by chef Mike and his team.

As with the catering arrangements, there's an easy atmosphere throughout the whole of Harburn, which was built on the site of a castle blown up by Oliver Cromwell. The Spurway family, who inherited the property in the 1970s, has given it a relaxed feel – chintzy but not snooty in the least.

The four reception rooms that radiate from the pillared hallway, with rug-strewn flagstones and a spiral staircase, all exhibit this laid-back elegance. Filled with antique furniture, the drawing room is still the kind of place where you could happily put your feet up on the sofa. And you're not constrained by set meal times, either. If you take the catered option, breakfast can be at any time you care to roll out of bed.

Once you are up, there's plenty to do. Harburn benefits from being on the fringes of Edinburgh (and more than one celeb has stayed here when

visiting the city) as well as being in its own rural paradise, where you can row to an island in the loch for a picnic, walk, fish or shoot. Back at the house, there are books to be read in the well-stocked library, and a stylish billiards room, with its hide and oak chairs overlooked by a Raeburn oil painting of Sir David Baird, a family ancestor.

After a day of activity or relaxation, it's up the spiral stairs to the bedrooms – all but one are on the first and second floors – which are spacious, some with four-posters or brass bedsteads, others with large bow windows and ornate cornicing. The lodges, too, are well furnished, particularly Haymains, which sleeps nine and comes with an elegant cream sitting room and farmhouse-style kitchen. Nor will anyone staying there be left to fumble their way blindly through the trees at the end of an evening at the main house; Bill the night attendant is happy to drive people back to their lodge when they're ready to turn in.