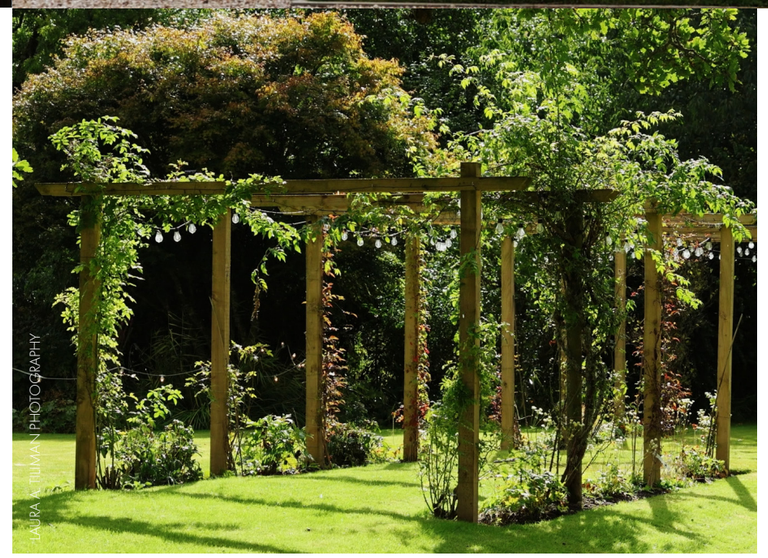
YSW ON LOCATION

Ladyburn House

ASHLEIGH DOUGALL FINDS HISTORY, HEART AND A WHOLE LOT OF CALM IN THE AYRSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE


LAURA A. TILIMAN PHOTOGRAPHY


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Having visited Ladyburn House before, I already knew it was beautiful – but staying overnight revealed a whole new side to this extraordinary place.

We began with a wander through the gardens, following the peaceful stream that gives the house its name. Beneath the magnificent oak tree, there's a wooden swing that's become a favourite spot for wedding photos. It's the kind of place where you feel miles away from everyday life – exactly what you want before a wedding weekend.

Ladyburn House dates back to the 1600s and was once owned by Robert the Bruce. In April 2024, it found new custodians in Nenah and James Favelle (its fourth owners) who have lovingly restored it from the ground up. Their goal was never to create a 'traditional' wedding venue, but a place of connection and wellbeing. "We're in the business of love," Nenah told me – and honestly, you can feel that everywhere you go.



Today, Ladyburn hosts wedding weekends, elopements, hen parties and wellness retreats, all with the same relaxed, personal touch. When couples book, the entire property becomes theirs – nine ensuite bedrooms, two elegant living rooms, a dining room for intimate breakfasts or dinners, and gardens that seem to stretch endlessly. Weddings here are never rushed. Guests are encouraged to slow down, eat well and be fully present with the people they love.

Nenah and James themselves married under that same oak tree, surrounded by their closest friends. It's now one of several ceremony spots, alongside the sailcloth marquee and the main house – each offering its own distinct feel. Inside, the house is warm, calm and beautifully styled. Nothing feels staged or formal. It's refined yet relaxed, full of thoughtful detail.

I stayed in Room 8 – bright, cosy and full of charm, it set the tone for the entire house. Waking up to birdsong and a gentle breeze was the perfect way to start the day. Ladyburn sleeps up to 18 guests, and each bedroom has its own personality – unique but cohesive, with luxurious bedding and beautiful bathroom products.

For larger celebrations, the sailcloth marquee (originally installed for Nenah and James's own wedding in 2025) has become a permanent feature. It blends seamlessly with the garden and can host up to 70 guests for dinner and dancing. When it's not being used for weddings, it transforms into a serene space for yoga or retreats – a clever, creative use of the grounds.

At the back of the house, a spa area brings another layer of calm. There's a hot tub, sauna, ice bath and yoga studio, plus a treatment room for massages and facials. I was lucky enough to experience a massage during my stay and it's easy to see why this has become a favourite pre-wedding spot.

Food is another highlight. The in-house Michelin-starred and award-winning chefs create seasonal menus using local ingredients, often from Ladyburn's garden. Whether couples opt for a formal wedding breakfast or a relaxed BBQ, every dish is tailored to their taste. During our stay, we enjoyed dinner prepared by the chef and it was exceptional – fresh, flavourful and beautifully presented. One dessert, disguised as a plant pot with a flower, was entirely edible and utterly delightful – fun, creative and so Ladyburn.

It's easy to understand why couples fall in love with this place. Ladyburn House isn't just about one big day. It's an experience, a retreat, a chance to just be together. A space that invites you to connect and celebrate in your own way. If you're dreaming of a wedding that feels relaxed, personal and deeply memorable, Ladyburn delivers it in every sense.

ESSENTIAL NUMBERS

Capacity ... Up to 70 in the Garden Pavilion
Accommodation ... Nine en-suite bedrooms
Price ... £7,500 to £8,750; catering from £55pp
Minimums ... No minimum numbers
Exclusive use ... Yes – house, gardens, spa and Pavilion
Corkage ... BYO permitted

THE PRACTICALITIES

Location ... Kilkerran, South Ayrshire
Accessibility ... Ground-floor bedroom, accessible doorways and step-free routes
Restrictions ... No fireworks, lanterns or naked flames; live music until 11pm
Ceremony ... Legal or symbolic ceremonies indoors, outdoors or in the Pavilion
Wet-weather plan ... Pavilion can host both ceremony and dining
Parking ... Onsite for residents plus overflow

THE QUICK-FIRES

Best month ... May to September, when the gardens are at their best
Most-photographed ... Oak swing, meadow paths, Pavilion at sunset
Good to know ... Designed for intimate, connection-focused weekends, not big parties

Did you know? ... Ladyburn also hosts wellbeing retreats centred on rest and connection

To find out more about weddings at Ladyburn House contact them directly:
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