

Get the DOWN

Discover all the behind-TV WEEK pays a visit to

They often say that when you visit the set of your favourite show, all the magic is gone.

But, according to TV WEEK's Jenny Cooney Carrillo, the mystique of *Downton Abbey* only became "more exciting" after her access-all-areas visit.

Here, she tells us what she experienced and the 10 secrets she found out...

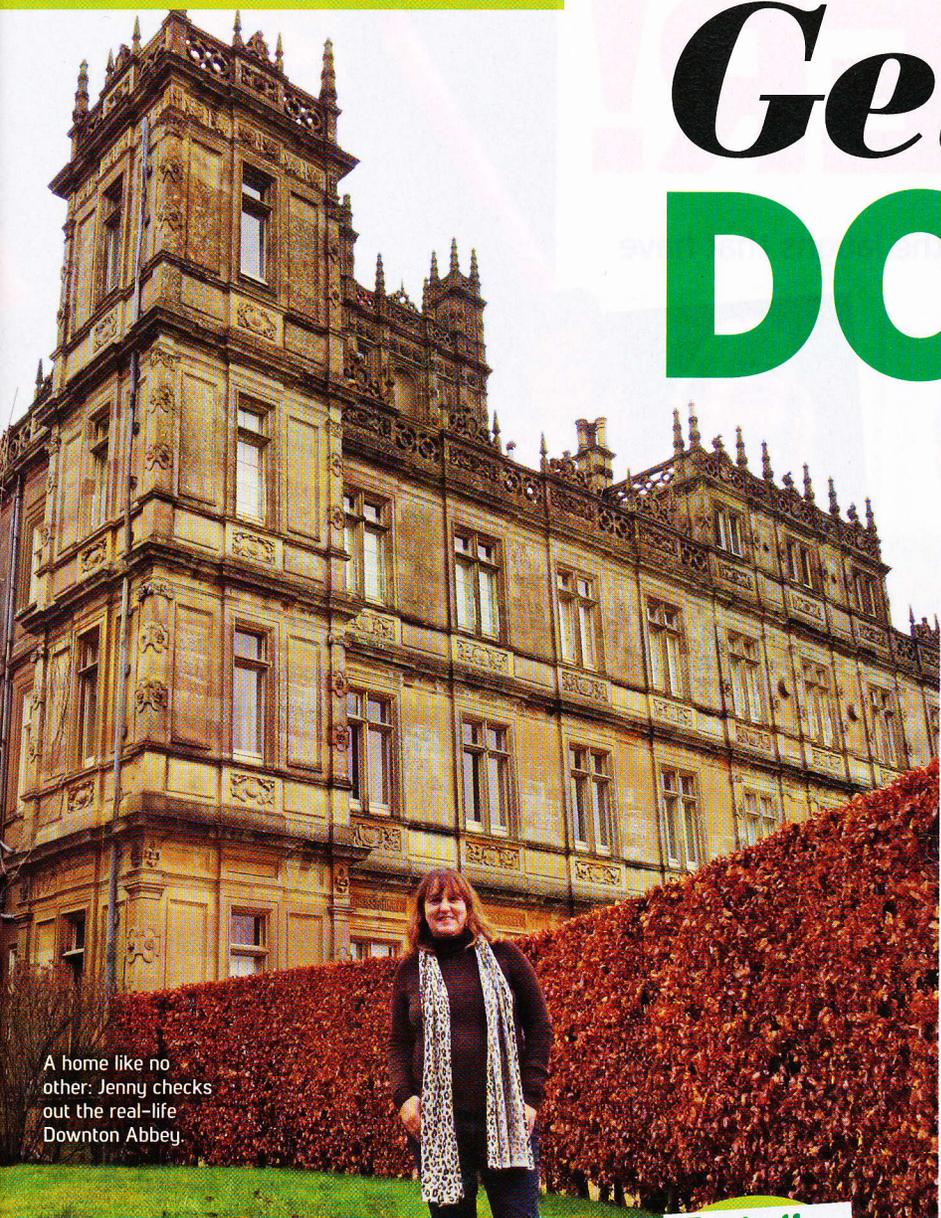
1 WHERE'S HOME?

Downton is filmed at Highclere Castle in Newbury, 100km west of London. The Victorian mansion has been in the Carnarvon family since 1679. In 1838, it was redesigned by Sir Charles Barry. He was the architect responsible for the Houses Of Parliament in London.

2 THERE IS NO DOWNSTAIRS

The downstairs at Highclere Castle is not available to the cast and crew, as it's currently a museum. All downstairs scenes are shot at Ealing Studios, west of London. There, all the sets are built for the kitchen and servant quarters.

"The only time we come to Highclere Castle is when we are serving dinner



A home like no other: Jenny checks out the real-life *Downton Abbey*.

Trivia time

There are whispers Dowager Countess Of Grantham could get her own spin-off show after *Downton* wraps up!

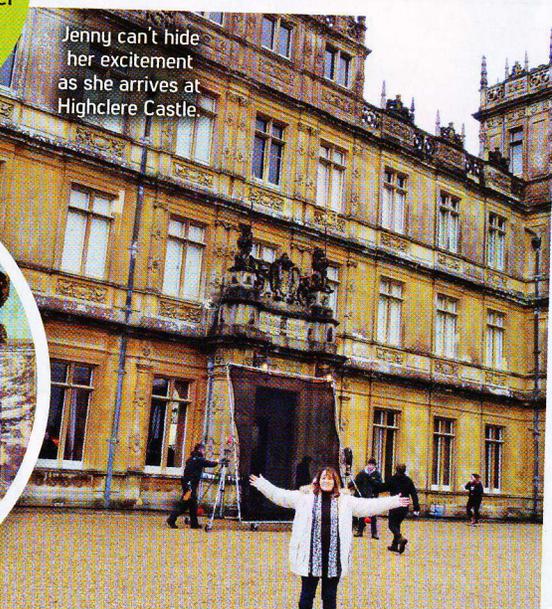


This staircase has served as the backdrop for pivotal *Downton* moments.



Laura Carmichael hanging out on the lavish set.

Jenny can't hide her excitement as she arrives at Highclere Castle.



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Top from left: Joanne Froggatt, Phyllis Logan, Raquel Cassidy, Sophie McShera and Lesley Nicol. Front from left: Michelle Dockery, Laura Carmichael, Elizabeth McGovern, Lily James, Maggie Smith and Penelope Wilton.

the-scenes secrets as *Downton Abbey's* set

to the Crawleys," Jim Carter, 66, known to millions as Carson, reveals.

3 ROOM FOR ALL

Filming takes place around the entrance lobby, staircase, drawing room, dining room, library and two of the bedrooms.

"My favourite room is only seen in the background from the drawing room," Laura Carmichael, 28, who plays Lady Edith Crawley, reveals as we stand in the brightly lit baroque-style room.

"It's the original music room."

Other cast members have their own favourite areas.

"My favourite bit is the entrance as you walk up to it," Elizabeth McGovern, 53, aka Cora Crawley, says.

4 RULES OF ETIQUETTE

Alastair Bruce, the show's historical consultant, is on set at all times.

The actor behind Tom Branson, Allen Leech, says Alastair's a stickler for details.

"When I was playing the chauffeur, he told me, 'I would never put my hands in my pockets,'" Allen, 33, says.

"He got so fed up with telling me that, he sewed the pockets of my costume.

"You can see in one episode from the second series, I go to put my hands in my pockets and it slides down my pants!"

Alastair also makes sure the cast don't get too tactile with each other. That's because that was the custom when fatal diseases abounded in the 1930s.

"There are moments where we want to hug or hold hands or have a kiss with a family member," Laura says. "We have to trust Alastair that it's not right.

"Even crossing our legs had to go."

5 SPRAWLING DISPLAY

The library contains 6000 books. Many have been in the bookcase for centuries and remain on display during filming.

"You can feel the history of the books talking to you," Hugh Bonneville, 51, who plays Robert Crawley, says of his favourite room.

"It's also just an interesting shaped room with different compartments to it.

"You never feel you are in a huge windy castle. It's more of a warm home."

6 STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

"So much has happened on that staircase," Michelle Dockery, 33, the actress behind Lady Mary Crawley, says.

"Such as that moment when Mary stopped midway in her wedding dress to get Carson's approval, or Edith and Mary in their Valentine's Day stand-off.

"There are magical moments there."

7 ART IMITATING LIFE?

The Arundel bedroom was used as Lady Edith's bedroom, before it was burnt down during this season of *Downton*.

It was previously used as an operating theatre during World War I. Its owners had turned it into a military hospital.

Edith's portrayal Laura points out one framed drawing on the wall (inset right).

"This woman looks just like Lady Edith," she marvels.

"[[It's] a wonderful coincidence, because it was here before we started filming."

8 CAREFULLY DOES IT

There are three priceless Van Dyck paintings on the wall, including a 1635 portrait of King Charles I. There are also priceless antiques around.

"We are constantly working to make sure we don't damage anything," Chris Croucher, *Downton's* producer, says.

"In five years, we've made just one mark on one table."



Jenny decks herself out in period attire.



A quick happy snap by the mantelpiece.



Behind cast member Laura Carmichael is a Lady Edith-lookalike portrait.

9 DESIGNS OF DOWNTON

Costume designer Anna Robbins has a team of 12 dressmakers. They make more than half the costumes from scratch.

"For the rest, we often find original beaded pieces and build them into a dress," she explains.

To dress the extras, they have racks of vintage clothing and hats ready for any occasion.

10 THEY AREN'T REALLY DRINKING TEA

"We don't want the cups and saucers to rattle during filming, so sometimes when you pick up the cup, it's attached to the saucer," Maggie Smith, 80, who plays Dowager Countess Of Grantham, reveals.

"It's a tricky thing to make sure you do it carefully. Also, the spoon can be attached to the cup, too!"

DOWNTON ABBEY
Thursday, 9pm, Channel Seven