

# Doc Martin hangs up his stethoscope for the final time

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Martin Clunes returns to Cornwall to play the nation's favourite grumpy medic in the final series of the hugely successful ITV drama Doc Martin.

Filming begins this week with Martin Clunes starring as Dr. Martin Ellingham, the GP with a brusque bedside manner and a phobia of blood, in eight new episodes of the popular drama produced by Buffalo Pictures, and set in the idyllic hamlet of Portwenn in Cornwall.

Buffalo Pictures have announced that they will be making a Christmas special to bid a final farewell to Doc Martin.

The company is also producing a documentary for ITV, provisionally titled "Doc Martin - A Celebration." Directed by Stuart Orme and produced by Evie-Bergson-Korn, the documentary will highlight the amazing longevity and impact both locally and around the world of Doc Martin over the years, as well as giving the

audience a glimpse behind the scenes of the final series with the cast and crew.

Picturesque Port Isaac provides the beautiful backdrop for the series, with all the regular members of the cast reprising their roles.

Caroline Catz plays Doc Martin's wife, Louisa Ellingham, who resigned from her job as headmistress at the local school to pursue a new career in child counselling.

Also returning for the finale are Dame Eileen Atkins who plays Doc Martin's formidable Aunt Ruth. Ian McNeice is back to play Bert Large, with Joe Absolom as his son Al. John Marquez is PC Joe Penhale, Jessica Ransom is the doctor's receptionist Morwenna Newcross and Selina Cadell is pharmacist Mrs Tishell.

At the end of the last series the Doc decided, after having his medical career scrutinised by the General Medical Council because of his blood phobia, that he would resign from being Portwenn's GP.

This final series sees the Doc making efforts to overcome his phobia, and beginning to question whether he made the right decision about resigning. He and Louisa have also welcomed a baby daughter, Mary Elizabeth, a sister for four-year-old James Henry.

With Louisa pursuing her new career as a child counsellor in his old surgery, the Doc is left literally holding the baby, and indulging his hobby of repairing clocks on the kitchen table. But does he really want his old job back?

The life of the curmudgeonly GP, and his on-off love affair, and eventual marriage to Louisa has won millions of fans in the UK and around the world since the first series aired in 2004.

The huge popularity of the ITV drama has brought thousands more tourists to the pretty hamlet of Port Isaac, and the surrounding areas of the north coast of Cornwall to see where the series is filmed. This boost to tourism was recognised by Cornwall Tourism which presented a special award for outstanding contribution to tourism to the Doc Martin team.

Over the years Buffalo Pictures has made regular contributions to Port Isaac's village funds. The funding has been used by the villagers to help and support a range of local facilities.

Commented Martin Clunes:

*"I have loved going to Cornwall to make Doc Martin over the last 18 years, and I have looked forward to returning to this beautiful county this year for the tenth and final series. The people of Cornwall, and Port Isaac in particular, have always been so helpful to us when we are making the series. We have some great story lines for the new series, and for the Christmas special, which I hope Doc Martin fans will love. I shall miss Cornwall, and all the lovely people we have worked with. But it is the right time to say farewell to the Doc, and Portwenn."*

ITV's Head of Drama Polly Hill commented:

*"If this really has to be the final series of Doc Martin, we thought we'd also commission a Christmas special! It's ill be sad to see the series come to an end after entertaining audiences on ITV for the last 18 years, but we'll make sure the finale is memorable and befitting such a success story. Our thanks to Martin Clunes, Philippa Braithwaite and the amazing cast and crew for creating such a special series."*

The first seven series of Doc Martin have been produced locally in seven territories: UK, Germany, France, Greece, Netherlands, Czech Republic/Slovakia and Spain and sold in 138 countries.

This series is produced by Philippa Braithwaite, executive producer is Mark Crowdy, and the directors are Nigel Cole and Philip John, and the writers are Jack Lothian, Andrew Rattenbury, Kevin Cecil, Julian Unthank and Chris Reddy.

Press Contacts

[Janice.Troup@itv.com](mailto:Janice.Troup@itv.com)

Picture Contacts

[Patrick.Smith@itv.com](mailto:Patrick.Smith@itv.com)

Viewer enquiries

<https://www.itv.com/contact/how-to-get-in-touch>