CORK
COUNTY & CITY VISITOR GUIDE

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2025 | 2026



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Cork City
S. HANDON
N20
AUDLEY PLACE
BLARNEY ST
CONVENT ST
R846
N. MALL
BLOR QUAY
KYRL'S QUAY
POPE'S QUAY
CAMDEN
VICTORIAN QUARTER
TO OLD CORK WATERWORKS MUSEUM
GRENVILLE PLACE
N. MAIN ST
COAL QUAY
LAVITT'S QUAY
MERCHANT QUAY
PAUL ST
ST PATRICK'S ST
CUSTOM HOUSE QUAY
SHEARES ST
DYKE PARADE
WASHINGTON ST
PLUNKETT ST
S. MALL
ALBERT QUAY
LEESTER QUAY
WANDESFORD QUAY
S. MAIN ST
OLIVER PLUNKETT ST
UNION QUAY
SULLIVAN'S QUAY
BUCKHAM PL
PROBY'S QUAY
CRAWFORD ST
Pinocchio Toys
Bonner Travel
Cork City Tours
Jacques Restaurant
Cork City Gaol
Cork Arts Theatre
Silver Wood Jewellers
Cork Opera House
Cork Harbour Tour

Welcome to our **Cork City and County Guide**.
We will take you on a journey through the city and round the county to find interesting places to visit, fun things to do, facts you may not have heard and interactive codes to listen to.
Check out our website for even more places to see, visit, sleep or eat at throughout Ireland, just scan the QR code on the front of the guide. Above all, take your time, unwind and let the magic of Ireland envelop you.
Please mention this guide when doing business with our advertisers, whose support enables us to provide our guides.
You will encounter lots of the history of Cork and County throughout this guide, I hope you enjoy it, I really enjoyed learning all about it!
Imagine the work it took to infill the tributaries of the River Lee 200 years ago – no handy JCB diggers or dumpers then!
And what a buzz there must have been with all the merchants around the Quays of Cork!



Cork, the 'Rebel' county

So legend tells it... It was when Gerald Fitzgerald, the 8th Earl of Kildare was known unofficially as the King of Ireland, events in the 15th century earned Cork the nickname of the Rebel County.

In 1491, Perkin Warbeck had originally arrived in Cork to be a sort of male model for his merchant fathers finest silk cloth. So charasmatic was Perkin, that people assumed he must be a young aristrocrat. Perkin claimed he was in fact, Richard, Duke of York, one of the disappeared "Princes In The Tower" and the one true King! Most of the people of Cork, including the Lord Mayor backed Warbeck.

The Tudor English monarchy then named Cork as being the Rebel county for its support of Warbeck, a pretender to the throne. During the late 15th century, there were more intense struggles as England tried to assert itself over Ireland.

Paul St

In May 1723, construction of St Paul's Church began – A Sailors resting place. Using a subscription of £1897 by parishioners and land granted to Peter Brown, the Protestant Bishop of Cork at the time. There is stucco work on the interior of the church, reputedly the work of Italian prisoners taken during the Napoleonic wars.

The church was built on an island surrounded by water and marsh and took 6 years to build.



In July 1727, a town merchant, John Hawkins who was a former sheriff of Cork in 1707, was granted permission to enlarge Paul Street (before it was named as such), which led to a new Customs House near the church.

Now home to many fine local shops, selling an array of items from a children's toy shop, eateries, a shopping centre and a sweet shop!



Nelson Place

Admiral Nelson Place was created by the filling in of Lavitt's Quay and open channel in front of the Customs House sometime between 1801 and 1832. The name was changed to Emmett Place in 1898, Robert Emmett led a rebellion against the English in 1803 and was executed for high treason against the British King George III Late in the 1800s, the Customs House became the premises of the Royal Cork Institution and was refurbished.

A Cork committee acquired old houses by Customs House and built much-needed better premises for Art students. The building was refurbished and a large extension was built on its southern side. Subsequently, it became home to the Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, so named after a prominent city merchant, William Horatio Crawford, who donated £20,000 to complete the renovation.



LAST MINUTE OFFER AVAILABILITY

SCAN HERE **DAILY** FOR NEW LAST MINUTE **ACCOMMODATION** AND **RESTAURANT** DEALS!

Crawford Art Gallery is a national cultural institution located in a significant heritage building in the heart of Cork city dedicated to the visual arts, both historic and contemporary.

The Gallery is home to a collection of national importance, telling a compelling story of Cork and Ireland over the last three centuries. Open 7 days a week the Gallery is free to enter and Cork city's most visited cultural attraction, the Gallery boasts a stunning locally run café serving fresh local produce for which Cork is famous. Join a free tour with an expert guide, which take place every Thursday at 6:30pm and Sunday & Bank Holidays at 2pm.



Credit: John Butts, View of Cork from Audley Place, c.1750. Collection Crawford Art Gallery, Cork.



Cork Opera House was built 170 years ago and has had many identities since. Firstly as the Athenaeum, then Munster Hall, The Great & Royal Opera House Company, then finally Cork Opera House in 1877.

A devastating fire completely destroyed most of the structure in 1955. Following a ten year fund-raising campaign, a modern theatre was finished in 1965.

The stunning bright glass front was designed in 1993 and completed in 2000 with the main auditorium, two bars, corporate boxes, foyer, café and shop.





Cork Opera House has had a glorious history of both culture and architecture dating back to its inception in 1852 when it was first built on Anglesea Street to house the National Exhibition.

Originally built for the promotion of science, literature and the fine arts, Cork Opera House was to be used for the purpose of lectures, meetings, and exhibitions. The Athenaeum later became known as The Munster Hall and in 1877 it was renamed the Opera House after extensive reconstruction.

As it was designed by the much celebrated architect Sir John Benson, the structure was deconstructed brick by brick to be rehoused on Emmet Place or as it was known then, Nelson Place. It is the only purpose built Opera House in the country.

Located in the heart of Cork City, Cork Opera House is Ireland's premier venue for the best concerts, comedy, drama, dance, family fare, and, of course, opera.

With one of the largest stages in Ireland, our 1,000 seater Opera House has been a Cork cultural institution for over 160 years and continues to strive to present and produce both indigenous and international top class acts for the people of Cork and beyond.

Cork Opera House: celebrating 170 years

Celebrating its 170th anniversary at the centre of the region's artistic life, Cork Opera House is more than a cultural institution. Located in the heart of the city by the banks of the River Lee, southern Ireland's premier arts venue is synonymous with the cultural heritage of the people of Cork; its long history reflecting the history of the city itself. Through good times and bad, the Opera House has always been there - a part of the wider community reflecting the ever changing times and providing a world-class stage for Cork's rich and varied creative life.



Cork people love their opera house and its unwavering support for local artistic talent. More than a venue, the Opera House is an integral part of the community of the city. From big international touring shows to debut performances by local musicians, the Opera House is proud of the varied programme of events it offers. Few cultural bodies can boast such a strong sense of community and a position at the heart of local cultural life. The Opera House is synonymous with Cork and that unique legacy is set to continue into the future.

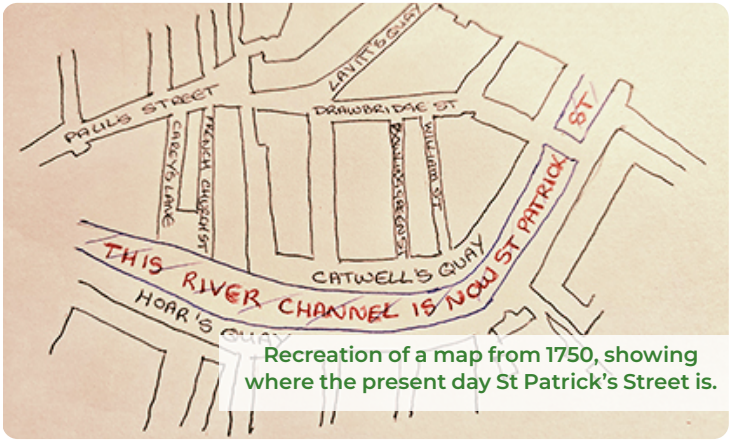


It is the only purpose-built opera house in the country. It boasts one of the largest stages on the island of Ireland, capable of hosting large-scale productions including opera, ballet, musicals and orchestral concerts.

As well as its unique ability to host a wide variety of performances, Cork Opera House is also one of the last remaining independent producing-receiving houses in Ireland, meaning that it both creates original productions and hosts a diverse range of visiting performances. This artistic independence allows for a varied programme, including a wide variety of shows and productions from the local, to the national and international, all contributing to making Cork Opera House a thriving hub for culture and creativity.

St Patrick's Street

St Patrick's Street used to be a curving channel of the River Lee, busy with merchants trading their wares at the quays, shops and warehouses on both sides. New surnames of merchantile families were recorded after 1690, which were used as street names and still appear in streets adjacent to St Patrick's Street, such as Lavitt, Tuckey, Pembroke, Winthrop, Deane and Maylor.
See how many you spot as you walk round.



Recreation of a map from 1750, showing where the present day St Patrick's Street is.

In the late 1700s, the canal was infilled and residences were built overlooking the quays, which can still be seen on St Patrick's Street and the South Mall, with steps leading up to the front doors.
For 33 years the street was served by the Cork Electric Tramways and Lighting Company until the Irish Omnibus Company increased in 1931 and the trams shut down.



Late 1900s image of St Patrick's Street

Window shopping and wandering along St Patrick's Street was a favourite pastime of local Cork people, chatting, stopping for a drink. This was known as 'doing Pana' and the nickname Pana remains to this day.

During the late 1990s, the entire street was repaved in high quality granite and limestone, and the pavements widened to create the wide, elegant street you see today, with plaza areas.
Dunnes Stores, Browne Thomas, Flying Tiger, book and sports shops can be found along this wide street with iconic leaning lampposts, taxi ranks and bus stops. The street has since won two awards as Ireland's best shopping area.



Present day St Patrick's Street

In March 2024, Cork's own Cillian Murphy, known recently for his role in Peaky Blinders, won Best Actor award at the Oscars in Los Angeles. Pride in Cillian rose when he thanked everyone in Irish: "Go raibh míle maith agaibh."
Someone placed a star on the side of the old Debenhams building on St Patrick Street to pay tribute to this local star.
Born in Douglas, County Cork, he was raised in Ballintemple, a suburb of Cork. He studied law at University College Cork but dropped out after a year to pursue his interests in music, playing guitar in various bands.







Atkins Hall stands proud from the opposite bank of the River Lee, a majestic architectural structure, Designed by William Atkins, the random coursed stone, multi gabled elevation creates an impressive architectural building.
Formerly the Eglington Asylum, it is one of the largest 19th century institutional buildings in the country. It is prominently sited on a ridge overlooking the Lee Valley to the west of city.

Following vacation of hospital use, permission was granted for a conversion of the existing building to a new residential development. Only half of the existing building has been converted to apartments with the remainder left abandoned. Significant fire damage occurred to the unfinished section in 2010.

Festivals in and around Cork

Basant/Kite Flying Festival, Carrigaline Park | 27th June – 22nd July 2025

Live at the Marquee, Marquee Road, Ballintemple, Cork – a unique festival from featuring many different artists | 5th June – 27th July 2025

Musgrove Park Concerts, Tramore Road, Cork - five acts performing for two weeks | June 2026, dates to be confirmed

Volvo Cork Carnival Week | 6th – 10th July 2025

Cork on a Fork Fest | Wed 13th – Sun 17th August 2025

Cork Folk Festival | 2nd – 5th Oct 2025

Guinness Cork Jazz Festival | 23rd – 27th October 2025

Cork International Film Festival, Cork City | 11th –13th Nov 2025

Dates for 2026
International Choral Festival, Cork | 29th April – 3rd May 2026

The Farmgate Café National Poetry Awards, Cork | May 2026

Ballymaloe May Fair | Fri 15th – Sun 17th May 2026

Cork Poetry Festival, Cork City Library | May 2026

Midleton Arts Festival Art Market | May 2026

Cork Harbour Festival, Cork City | Dates to be confirmed for 2026, May/June

Cork Mid-Summer festival, Cork City – *a multi-disciplined Art Festival* | June 2026

The Cork Summer Show, Curraheen Village, Bishopstown | Sat/Sun mid-June 2026

Cork Brick Show (LegoShowsIreland) Marina Market, Cork | 2026 dates to be confirmed

Oliver Plunket St

Three hundred years ago, Oliver Plunkett Street, then called Georges Street, was built on marshland. You can still see many buildings from the architecture of the late 1700s and 1800s, one being the building housing John Caly Opticians, with beautiful bowed oriel windows.

In the 1920s, the street had a plumber/gas fitter, refreshment rooms, many vintners, a hairdresser, a servants agency, a yeast agent, a carriage builder and a general Post Office, among many others.



In 2016 it was awarded the "Great Street Award" by London's Academy of Urbanism. Nowadays, Oliver Plunkett Street is home to coffee shops, wine bars, pubs, cafés, jewellers, a hardware shop, the Evening Echo man, beauty shops, clothes shops, convenience store and a Turkish barber.

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Silverwood Jewellery is a family owned business trading in the heart of Cork City since 1999.

We offer beautiful collections of unusual, handcrafted and one of a kind jewellery in Sterling Silver, Rhodium and Gold. Many of our pieces are handset with precious or semi precious stones bringing you something different but yet very affordable!

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Looking forward to solving your gift and treat problems.

You will find Country Markets, Farmers Markets and pop-ups all over Ireland. Most have one thing in common, they sell local, very fresh, mostly organic, delicious produce. Give them a try, you'll taste the difference.



Mahon Point and Douglas Farmer markets bring together a fantastic mix of local farmers and artisan food producers every week for their loyal customers. You'll find fresh fish from the boats in West Cork, carefully reared meat including local pork, beef and chicken, locally grown seasonal fruit and vegetables, fresh bread and pastries from local bakeries and many other types of locally produced foods and drinks.

The markets run from 10am until 2pm and you can also enjoy a cup of locally roasted coffee and a variety of food cooked at the market to eat there or take away. Woodfired pizzas, fresh pasta, vegetarian and vegan foods, free range rashers and sausage sandwiches, lamb kebabs along with salads, pates and cold foods to take away - perfect for picnics.

Different musicians play every week so call by and enjoy the sounds whilst you shop. There is plenty of parking available on site and both markets have plenty of supermarkets and other shops nearby where you can pick up everything else you might need. You will receive a great welcome at the market!



English Market

You can also find the English Market in Grand Parade, City Centre. The English Market, so called as it was created in 1788 by the Protestant, or English, corporation that controlled Cork City until 1841.

In 1940, Catholics, or the Irish, established their own market, known as the Irish Market, to differentiate between the two. You can buy Artisan breads, fruit and veg, salted ling, tripe, cheap cuts, organic meats and olives amongst a whole lot more here!



Bonner Travel Culinary Tours specializes in all-inclusive, guided tours of Ireland, offering bespoke travel experiences that go beyond the ordinary. Their culinary tours highlight the best meals and drinks Cork has to offer, from local markets to hidden eateries. Each tour showcases the region's rich food culture and stories behind the products. Whether you're indulging in handcrafted meals or seeking a tailored, multi-day journey,

Bonner Travel ensures an intimate, unhurried experience full of local charm. Book your tour today and explore the best of Cork's food scene with a personal touch.



Jaques is a 'local gem', known for their simple ethos: local food, cooked well. Their drinks menu follows the same philosophy, featuring low-intervention, biodynamic, and organic wines, local beers, and even some brilliant German brews. They love supporting local distilleries, with Rebel City Distillery being one of our current favourites, and we serve Poachers mixers with our spirits.



Located in the centre of Cork, the **Coal Quay** market is a well-known, much-loved food market.
Boasting a wide array of stalls, selling an extensive variety of locally produced goods from chemical-free vegetables, cheeses, fruit, fish, preserves, home-baked bread & cakes to vegan food, hot drinks, crafts and much more!

If you're visiting Cork, you must experience this historic, open-air farmer's market. Make sure to pop over to the Coal Quay any Saturday morning from 8.30 am-2.30 pm. Only a stone's throw away from Cork's iconic English Market, make sure to visit both for a real Cork experience.



Cornmarket Street/Coal Quay

Cornmarket Street, better known as Coal Quay by locals, once a quay, was built over a channel of the Lee, as were so many streets of Cork Centre. Known over the years as Timber Quay and Potato Quay - you can see what produce the merchants were transporting! Coal Quay is a short length of quayside between Kyrl's and Lavitt's Quays.

Kathy Barry, born in 1906, was dubbed 'The Queen of Coal Quay' She took over the family business, The Eating House in 1947 on Dalton's Avenue, just off Cornmarket St. Renowned for her humour and personality, her business also became known for her bangers and mash, crubeens (cooked in a huge black cauldron), and illicit liquor.



Courtesy of Irish Examiner Archive

Kathy is immortalised in this song:

"Cabbages and prams, chickens and hams, you buy them Up the Coal Quay,

Dealers in shawls, farmers an' all, you hear them Up the Coal Quay;

Buskers sing bustle 'n' swing, it's the scene Up the Coal Quay,

Oh what a fool, I left that old school, I also miss Kathy Barry's."

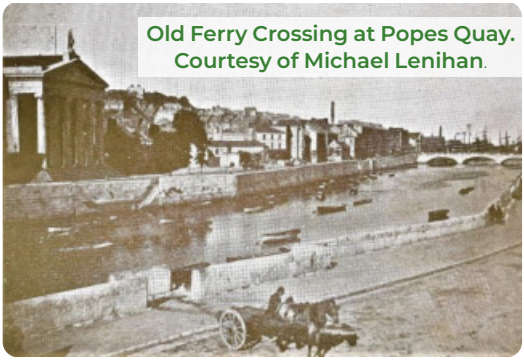


There used to be a Cornmarket on the street, which is how it obtained its name and it has long been famous for street traders, with a vibrant market there to this day.



Quays, Ferries & Bridges

In 1620, Dominick Roche was granted the sole right to carry passengers by ferry from Lavitt's Quay to Ferry Lane by the present day St Mary's Church. Later, the ferry was used in the erection of stone bridges after the old wooden ones were demolished.
In 1713, the rate to cross over the river Lee was set at no more than one halfpenny, OR the comparable weight of one man in salt or other goods! One would not want to be very overweight in those days when travelling!!



Old Ferry Crossing at Popes Quay. Courtesy of Michael Lenihan.

Four years later the widow Pope was able to build a Quay between Farren's and Browne's Quays, and the name changed to Pope's Quay. Before Patrick's bridge was built, ferries were used for transporting passengers, goods and livestock across from North Quay to Ferry Quay and the North Channel. Ferry Quay was the size of Coal Quay and Lavitt's Quay combined in 1750.

The Shandon bridge, which is pedestrianised and used today, was erected near the old river crossing route.

One of several ancient settlements around Cork, Shandon took its name from Sean Dún, which means old fort. Built in the early 18th century, St Anne's Church houses the well known Shandon Bells, which can be visited, and played (!) any time of year for around €6 per adult. Open 11am – 3pm, longer in summer months. See the circular Firkin Crane Centre, an institute for dance. Or to relax, Myo Café is a place to just unwind and feel part of the community, Pope's Quay.



Fun Facts!

- There are 132 steps to the top of the building
- St Anne's Church was the first ever building to have a four-faced clock until Big Ben was built in London
- It was called 'The Four Faced Liar' because none of its 4 sides showed the same time
- The bells were cast in 1750, 1869 and 1908

The Victorian Quarter

So called because of all the wonderful buildings from that era, the Victorian Quarter is the area north of the river, from the bridge over from Crawford Art Gallery to opposite where the city point ends. Kent station can be found here, see p18 for a link to their website. Cork's VQ as it is known, was tipped as being the coolest neighbourhood by the Sunday Times Ireland.
Largely commercial, the area also bustles with music and entertainment and some amazing bars, restaurants and hotels. The glorious Everyman Palace Theatre is here, and a bowling alley. Mother Jones' flea market with independently operated stalls selling vintage, antique, retro and collectables is in York St, just off MacCurtain St.

With Vibes & Scribes crafts (the biggest collection of fabric and all things wool I've seen!), Paddy Wagon Tours, The Metropole Hotel, Cork Tyre centre (for when you're in need!) live Irish music in traditional pubs, Cask, Lab 82, cool wine bars like Sin é and Nells, Cork's 96fm radio station, cafés, bars, hostel and guest houses. The area was originally outside the bounds of the walled city of Cork as a swampy area of marshland islands and it was only in the late 17th and 18th century that development began. Building the Michael Collins Barracks, formerly the Victorian Barracks at the beginning of the 19th century led to it becoming an area of commerce and the terminus of the Cork to Dublin train.



Rebel City is a boutique distillery at the forefront of a new wave of craftsmanship, revitalizing Cork's historic Docklands. Nestled in a beautifully restored factory, they breathe new life, creating spirits inspired by the rich heritage of Leeside.

They source their ingredients from across the globe to celebrate and reflect the unexpected connections and cultural vibrancy that have always been the hallmark of worlds great port cities.

MacCurtain Street

Across the Lee over St Patricks bridge, you will find MacCurtain Street. In the 1600s, during the Williamite war the city walls were badly damaged and instead of repairing them, they were abandoned and the marshy area outside the walls started to be developed, filling in the river channels and building bridges, and east along the river part of the area became MacCurtain Street. To the left is Pope's Quay at Shandon, and on these solid paved streets, you'll find many cafés, bars and local shops. It is on the way there you'll come across the impressive Vibes & Scribes.

Changes are underway in the street to improve journey times of buses and improve walking and cycling infrastructure along the Quays and junctions by the MacCurtain Street Public Transport Improvement Scheme.

If you continue along MacCurtain Street until it develops into Lower Glanmire Rd, you'll find **Kent Railway Station**, from which you can travel all over the country.

Find your train

Back across the bridge, into the area which was once surrounded by waterways, is the city and walking eastwards of the bridge is Parnell Place, the home to **Cork's Bus Station**, right on the edge of the shops, precincts, cafés and restaurants on the island of the city of Cork, connected to the rest of Cork by bridges.

Bus Timetables

Located in Cork city centre, **The Everyman** listed building and a jewel of late Victorian architecture. This 650-seat building possesses a rich and fascinating history and the stunning auditorium is a favourite with audiences and performers alike for its intimacy and atmosphere.

The Everyman opened in 1897, and at that time was called the Cork Palace of Varieties. In its earlier years it hosted performers such as Charlie Chaplin and Laurel and Hardy. With the advent of the 'talkies', The Palace became a cinema in the 1930s, but closed in 1988. 1990 marked the reopening of the building as a working theatre, known as the Everyman Palace Theatre. In 2012, it rebranded to The Everyman, although many people still affectionately call it the Everyman Palace.

The organisation is a registered charity whose mission is focused on audiences and artists in Cork, and on building its profile nationally as a producer of top-quality theatre.

Old Cork Waterworks Experience on the River Lee was renovated and developed by Cork City Council as a tourist and education attraction in 2004. Restored from previously derelict Victorian buildings with a 33m high chimney, a steam engine building and boiler house. Now incorporating a visitor centre, a café, a playground with picnic area and an education centre, all fully wheelchair accessible.

Cork city's water supply was first established here in 1768 at the Old Cork Waterworks and was moved to the current treatment plant in 1879. There are guided and self-guided tours, telling the story of the waterworks development and the impact it had on the city, after disease had been rife in the city as they could only obtain their water from the river or public fountains.
For further information see www.oldcorkwaterworks.ie

Cork City Gaol was built in 1824. Women, men and children were imprisoned here for various crimes and some were held here before transportation to Australia. During the early 20th Century, Political prisoners were kept here during the Irish Civil War.

Visit Cork City Gaol and even get locked into a cell in the prison that Countess Markievicz called "the most comfortable jail" she had ever been in!





Convent Avenue, Sunday's Well, Cork City, T23 VX25
021-4305022 www.corkcitygaol.com

Experience what life was like within the walls of the 19th century Cork Gaol.

In the heart of Cork, discover the stately Cork City Gaol, a heritage centre that shares fascinating insights about what life was like for prisoners, wardens and the governor in the late 19th / early 20th century. Visitors will wonder at the contrast between the beautiful setting in a castle-like building and the long, stark corridors with cold cells inside.
The whole historical experience is brought to life with amazingly lifelike figures, furnished cells and haunting sound effects.

The real stories of real people intrigue and educate all who walk through the gatehouse. An audio-visual presentation is an excellent way to end the tour as it gives an insight into the social history and contrasting lifestyles lived within 19th century Cork.

Experience your visit through a self-guided tour with a guidebook or an audio guide; or book in your group to get a dedicated tour guide share the stories of the Gaol with you.
The gaol now also boasts a scenic walkway around the perimeter of the building that can be enjoyed at your own leisure.

For more information visit **www.corkcitygaol.com**


Photo credit: AFTA

Cork Harbour is a large natural basin at the mouth of the River Lee. Evidence of prehistoric Mesolithic communities has been found here as well as historical trade records with the Continent, Britain and Ireland. Emigrant trade was booming to Australia and America in the mid 1800s which increased the importance of Cork Harbour as the leaving and arriving gateway. Titanic's fateful journey had its final port of call here in 1912, though it never actually docked but passengers and mail were ferried to and from the port.

In 1918 the first US Naval Airbase in Ireland was at the eastern part of the harbour. Shipping became less popular in the 20th century, with commercial air travel becoming more popular.

Home to fantastic **Cork Harbour Cruises**, several pretty islands dotted around, sea-life and stunning views, don't miss out on this gem of a harbour while you're in the city.



On the outskirts of Crosshaven, Camden Fort Meagher has breathtaking views of Cork harbour and Cobh. Ram's Head was one of the most important defensive areas, with the first defences built in 1550, called James Battery. Over the years, extra defences were added and the fort extended. It was used as a naval base in WWI. In 2010, Cork County Council afforded a lease to the local community in Crosshaven who instrumented a volunteer campaign to develop the fort as the heritage tourism site it is today. It has just undergone more recent development and is back open for 2024.

A short drive from Crosshaven are sandy beaches and secluded coves, woodland walks, horse riding, cycling, golf, fishing, sailing and tennis.

Ballintemple

Fun history facts:

• The ruins of Dundanion Castle lie close to Páirc Uí Chaoimh by the River Lee

• William Penn, the founder of the state of Pennsylvania, is said to have departed from here on his journey to the United States in 1682

• George Boole, the mathematician and inventor of Boolean algebra, lived in Ballintemple during the nineteenth century whilst he was a professor at University College Cork

• Also known as the South Chapel, St. Finbarr's South is a lovely Catholic church that dates back to 1776. Consequentially, it is the oldest Catholic church still in use in Cork City.



St Finbarr's Church

Live at the Marquee is the month long venue which has three and four-hour long concerts.

Ballintemple is served by a single city bus route, number 202, which runs from Mahon, through Blackrock, Ballintemple, Cork City Centre, to Gurranabraher and Knocknaheeny.

The seating is good, and allows you to see the concert well. There is on-site car parking.



25th June - 27th July 2025
Appearing this year are:

Sugarbabes, The Coronas, Gavin James, Van Morrison, Bicep, John Bishop, Bryan Adams, Ne-Yo, Jenny Greene and the RTÉ concert orchestra, Cristy Moore, Lyra, Mick Flannery and Biggest Disco with music from the 90s & 00s among others.

Blackrock

In 1582 a fort was built at Blackrock to repel pirates and invaders. A round tower with walls of over 2 metres in thickness was added in 1600 and parts of this round tower exist on the waters edge today. The city of Cork owned Blackrock Tower in 1608 but the old four storey tower was destroyed by fire in 1722 and a new one built by the citizens for less than £300. It was used for banquets and gatherings. One custom was 'throwing the dart' which involved an arrow at least four feet long being thrown by the Mayor from a boat to indicate the Corporation's jurisdiction over the harbour. After one such banquet it was again destroyed by fire in 1827. The rebuilding was completed two years later with an extra three storeys added to the original tower and they rebuilt the outbuildings, which cost the city £1000.
In the 20th century, the castle was used as a private dwelling, offices, a restaurant and rowing club headquarters.

In 2001 the Cork Corporation reacquired the building and work commenced to renovate and re-purpose it as a Museum and Observatory, Science Centre and Laboratory. For €6 - €26 you will have access to their award winning science centre, a guided tour of the castle and a live astronomy show.


Photo: Cork Harbour Cruises

Blackrock Castle walk is just over 8km and takes about an hour and a half. Dogs must be kept on a lead.
Cork Harbour Greenway encompasses the Blackrock Castle to Passage West and also Crosshaven to Carrigaline.

The Cork, Blackrock and Passage Railway was a narrow gauge railway that operated from 1850 to 1931 between Cork and Passage West operating steam feeder ferries to other locations around Cork Harbour. It has since been made into a well kept public walkway and nature area with lighting and benches called Passage Railway Greenway, is 3km long and runs from Cork City docklands to Mahon, with works for a second stage due to start soon.

There are also parks and woods: Ballybrack woods, Tramore Valley Park, a nature reserve off Bessboro Rd, Mahon, Joe McHugh Park then over the Black Bridge which links Black Rock to Passage West and the Garryduff Woods.

Mahon

Mahon takes its name from Lough Mahon, a wide stretch of the upper section of Cork Harbour. Now residential, it used to be a fairly rural peninsula until the late 20th century. It has the South Ring Road running along its eastern and southern edges and entering the Jack Lynch Tunnel under the River Lee. The road gives access to Cork Airport as well as Cork city centre.



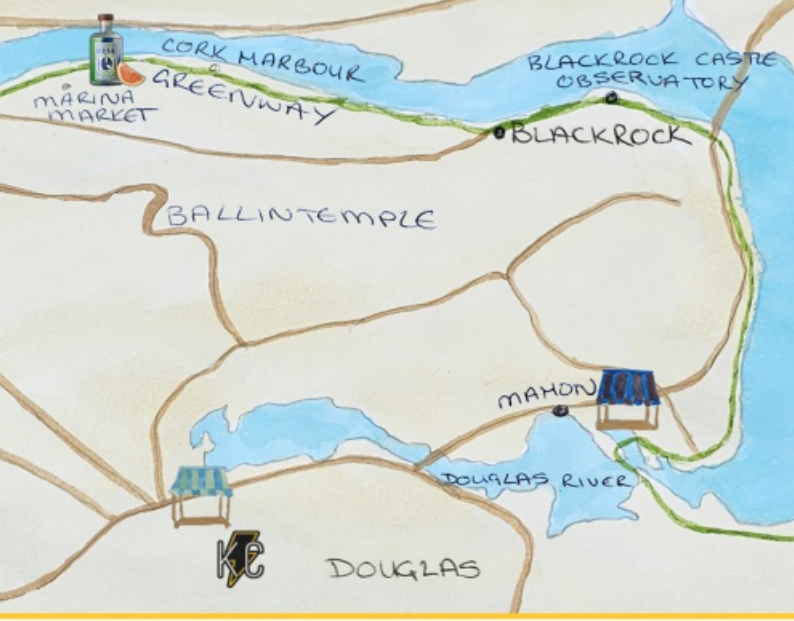
The area is the site of the Ringmahon House, which has been in its elevated position for almost two hundred years. It overlooks the local community and when built stood proudly over Lough Mahon and the River Lee. Formerly occupied by James Murphy of Murphy's Brewery and later by Ben Dunne of Dunnes Stores. Today the complex contains housing units for the elderly while the house is now the location of the Mahon Youthreach group.



The largest (and award-winning) Farmers Market in Cork is held at Mahon Point outside the main entrance to Mahon Point Shopping Centre every Thursday 10am – 2pm. The market has won an array of prestigious awards including the Good Food Ireland "Best Farmers Market Award" and the McKennas Guide "Best in Ireland" Award for eight years. In 2018, it won Best Farmers Market in Cork at the #96fmbestofcork awards with Cork's 96FM and The KC Show Corks 96 FM.



At Mahon Point Shopping Centre, there are an array of eateries, including Jump Juice, Nando's, O'Brien's, The Bagel Bar and Abra Kebabra's. There is a 13 screen Omniplex cinema with bespoke leather 'rocker' chairs.



Douglas Market

Rebel City Distillery

Mahon Market

KC & Son & Sons



Douglas

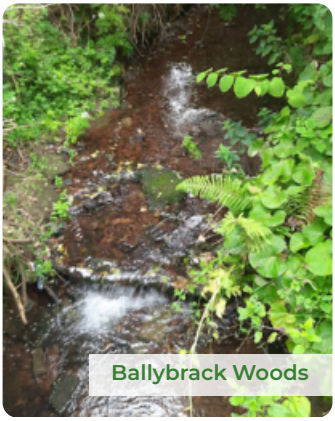
Originally a separate village, the growth of both the village and the city has meant Douglas has become incorporated into the city over time.

Within Douglas and the surrounding area are several proposed historic sites and settlements. A Bronze Age gold disc, dating back to 2500BC was found nearby, possibly from the ruined castle of Castletreasure. 300 years ago, the town mainly consisted of farms and had a population of around 300.

In the 18th century, the Douglas Factory was opened, with 100 looms producing sail-cloth, supplying to the Royal Navy amongst others. Skilled workers from Scotland and Ulster were employed in 1801 when the first powered spindles in Ireland were installed. As well as the mill workers, over 1,000 people worked from their homes, preparing the raw material in Douglas Village. Homes were built for the mill workers, some still in existence and a row of these terraced houses can be seen near the junction of Grange Road and Donnybrook Hill.

FOUR GENERATIONS, ONE FAMILY

Blink and you might miss us driving through Douglas, but KC's has been a Cork institution for over 65 years. As the oldest family-run takeaway in Cork, now proudly in its fourth generation, KC's continues to be a true family tradition. From being among the first to bring the hamburger to Cork, we've kept creating and evolving ever since. From the legendary King Creole to the Chicken Bombay and the Big Dipper, our flavours have become part of the city's story. We serve thousands every week with heart, hustle and family pride. What began as a humble chipper is now a cherished local landmark. Big taste, small space, always full of flavour.
At KC's, It's All Good."



Ballybrack Woods

Douglas has gorgeous views from its 18 hole golf course and beautiful walks through the Ballybrack Woods, parking in the Lions club carpark. Slightly hilly but suitable for buggies and dog friendly, it is covered by CCTV and well lit. The forest trail is really pretty, with herons and otters sometimes sighted at the river, which is perfect for a short stroll.

Beaches of Cork

Garryvoe Beach: One of Cork's busiest beaches. There's a hotel right next to the beach, so a place for some food and decent parking options available for daytrippers. The beach is a nice spot for a walk, a dip or for kite-surfing.

Fountainstown Beach: This popular beach has a bus service from the city and also has a large car park. It has sand but also small stones and some seaweed. It has loads of little pools for the young, and not so young, to explore. Also a shop and café nearby.

Sandy Cove, Ardkilly: A beautiful beach for swimming with views from the Ardkilly Creek to the Atlantic Ocean. Kayak and standup boards can be used along these calm waters. Parking is limited, and the roads are narrow but well worth the trip.

Inch Beach: Beautiful white sandy beach in East Cork. Perfect for swimming in the summer. Known locally for good surf and a great fishing spot.

Gyleen Bay Beach, near Inch: A pretty beach but stoney.

Youghal Beaches and Marshes: There are a few options here. Ballyvergan marshes for the ornithologists.
Claycastle Blue Flag beach with a long expanse of sand, perfect for shoreline swimming, running, walking and ball games. With a large car park and lifeguard on duty during the summer. Just a stroll away is Front Strand beach, with a promenade and soft white sand, great for paddling, sandcastles and picnics.

Garrylucas, White Strand: Is a sandy beach located at the Old Head of Kinsale. It has sand dunes in places and there is a public car park and toilet facilities available.

Robert's Cove Beach, Aghade: Safe sheltered inlet in a beautiful location. Great for swimming, paddling and canoeing. Fabulous sandy beach at low tide, rather small at full tide.

Myrtleville Beach: Lovely view out over the ocean, framed by rocks on each side with concrete steps down or a slope. Parking on the road, but don't block residents drives. Two cold-water showers at the top of the beach. Wear footwear going into the water, the stones are sharp.

Crosshavenhill Beach: Sandy and stoney beach but nice and quiet.

Church Bay Beach, Crosshaven: A rocky beach with a steep path down but nice and quiet. Great views from the cliffs and toilets available.

White Bay Beach, Rochespoint: A scenic, secluded beach with a steep path to it. Check the tides, as the beach gets small at high tide. Most of the time it's windy, but nice to swim, with shallow water. Lots of caves! You can see many boats and ships passing on the horizon as it is close to the harbour entrance.

Cuskinny Beach, near Cobh: Swimming, kayaking, standup paddling and shallow enough to be good for children. A little stoney but perfect for walking. Parking at the beach but no bins or facilities.

Little Island

Before the Northern Channel was filled in, Little Island was completely surrounded by water. Early people landed here in their dugout boats way back in 7000 BC (as attested by the many oyster shells discarded here). Excavations have found tidal mills, dating back to 63AD.

The parish dates back to the 17th century and was known as De Insula in the 14th century, meaning 'of the island' A causeway of hewn stone and a metal spring bridge built in 1833 separate it from the parish of Caherlog.

The area is mostly industrial, but it also boasts a large spa hotel, a bowling alley and eateries, as well as a gluten-free bakery in Euro Business Park.

There is the lovely, recently upgraded level pathway, Carrigrennan Loop footpath along the Lough Mahon, starting from Little Island Playground, leading through countryside along the south bank with amazing views out over Cork Harbour. You can explore scenic Carrigrennan Point and the castle known as 'The Mill'



Carrigrennan Mill

On the path, you will pass several pools, grass and furze in open areas and some small areas of relatively young woodland with views over to Fota Island and the Douglas estuary.

There's a great little business park with Living Dreamz, a tyre centre, Screwfix (my other half would want to know that, even when on holiday!) a dental surgery, The Range, JYSK and Airtastic family adventure centre.

Glounthaune

Glounthaune was originally built in 1810 on a tidal quay wall and named New Glanmire. It is on the Cork and Cobh and Mallow line, with Little Island, Fota Island and Midleton as more train stops on the line.





A new Sensory Garden opened at Craig's Field Glounthaune in 2023, providing countless fun benefits for individuals of all ages, especially children, inviting them to explore, smell and touch the plants, strategically placed to stimulate the senses. The idea is to reduce stress levels, promoting relaxation and to improve well-being, and the therapeutic experiences outside have shown to enhance cognitive abilities, encourage connection and help sensory development. In some cases there are plants to taste. Designed and developed by Cork County Council, supported by the Disability Participation and Awareness Fund and maintained by the Community Association, it now compliments the walkway, playground and outdoor gym.


Credit: Ashok Appu

Harper's Island Wetlands is situated near Glounthaune in Cork Harbour. The wetland is managed for nature conservation by Cork County council, partnering BirdWatch Ireland and the Glounthaune Community Association including Glounthaune Men's Shed and Tidy Town's Groups.

Many varieties of waterbirds visit this special place for refuge in the winter time. The wetlands also support native plant species and provide food and shelter for insects, bats and other mammals. There are two bird hides on the island which provide stunning views over the wetlands, and they have recently opened a new looped nature trail. The wetlands form part of the Cork Harbour Special Protection Area as well as part of the Great Island Channel Special Area of Conservation.


Photo credit: Jim Wilson

Fota Island

Fota Island was the private home of the Smith-Barry family for nearly 800 years until the estate was sold to University College Cork (UCC) in 1975.

The seeds of **Fota Wildlife Park** were sown in 1980 when the Director of Dublin Zoo proposed that a Wildlife Park be established in Ireland. Dublin Zoo had developed as much as it could at the time, and the Zoological Society of Ireland's Council accepted the idea as a project that could mark its 150th anniversary.
A proposal was made to establish a Wildlife Park on 70 acres of land on Fota Island, to be provided without cost but under licence from UCC in December 1980.

Fota House is one of Ireland's finest examples of Regency period architecture with superb neoclassical interiors. The main house dating from 1820, remained in the sole ownership of the Smith-Barry family for 155 years and today it shares the compelling life story of this family and their household staff. Now an Irish Heritage Trust Property, a visit to Fota House set amongst 115 acres, within the original 780-acre estate, promises endless opportunities for adventure. It features a globally renowned arboretum with a collection of rare and exotic plantings from the southern hemisphere, formal and working gardens that evolve with colour, scent & texture through each passing season.

Further highlights of this must-do experience include:
• Life Stories from the aristocratic Smith-Barry family to the servants who supported their lifestyle Downstairs, grand décor of the principal rooms & service wing Upstairs, neoclassical interiors, boudoir & charming nursery Art.
• One of the finest collections of landscape painting outside the National Gallery of Ireland with works from artists including William Ashford PRHA, Robert Carver, Jonathan Fisher and Thomas Roberts Arboretum.



• Hundreds of early 19th century tree specimens to be seen in the gardens.
• Finest collections of rare outdoor plantings in Ireland
• Working Britain Victorian gardens.
• Beautifully restored space with Victorian glasshouses & bothy buildings.

Cobh

Cobh (originally named Cove in 1750) is the largest town on Great Island and was the departure point for over a third of the 6 million Irish people leaving for North America from its major port between 1848 and 1950.

With breath-taking views across the harbour, one of the tallest buildings in Ireland, St Colman's Cathedral and a Victorian promenade and bandstand, it is a beautiful town to visit with colourful houses lining the bay.
Coach trips and cruise ships can be seen aplenty in the summer and there are numerous tours on land and by sea to book to fully experience this glorious area.

There is a lot of history about Cobh, the most well known being the last port of call for the Titanic on 11th April 1912 at Cobh, then called Queenstown, before she set out on her maiden voyage. 123 passengers boarded here, 44 of whom survived the sinking.
Also, the Cunard passenger liner, RMS Lusitania, which was sunk off the Old Head of Kinsale in May 1915 en route to Liverpool from the US, had the rescued survivors brought to Cobh. Many of those that perished are buried in the Old Church cemetery just north of the town. You can see the Lusitania Peace Memorial in Casement Square.



Spike Island

Robin Hill House

Fota House and Gardens

Cobh Big Yellow Bus Tour

Fota Wildlife Park

Cobh Heritage

Paddy Wagon Tours



Set on a hill overlooking beautiful Cork Harbour. **Robin Hill House** is a substantial former rectory displaying both Classical and Victorian features, indicative of architectural fashions at its time of construction. This eclectic mix of styles gives the house its distinctive appearance; a classical, elegantly proportioned façade combined with the Victorian penchant for canted bays and bay windows. It retains notable original features and materials such as sash windows ,window shutters, a stunning porch fireplace & basement. Robin Hill House is now a charming Victorian Guest House 10 minutes walk from the historic maritime town of Cobh.

Located on the shoreline of Cork harbour, **Rushbrooke** has many beautiful Victorian & Georgian properties.
Rushbrooke has a long tradition of ship and boat-building.
The area is named after Frederica Harriet Rushbrooke and her son and daughter who were granted lands under the 'Midleton Act' (1850). Frederica's husband Lord Rushbrooke was the Admiral in the royal navy (now Irish navy) which can be seen across the bay from the front bedrooms and garden of Robin Hill House.
The Rushbrooke family lived in Robin Hill House which was built in 1866. Rushbrooke has the oldest tennis club in Ireland, the Rushbrooke Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, which runs a number of tournaments each year.
Rushbrooke also has a railway station on the main Cork to Cobh line, located close to the Cork Dockyard Commercial Development. There is also a regular bus service to Cork city.





EXPLORE

COBH HERITAGE CENTRE

Self Guided tours

Step into Ireland's Emigration Story. Self guided tour with multi-language audio. Exhibitions on Irish Emigration, Titanic, Lusitania, Robinson Settlers and many more maritime tales.



Genealogy Services

Book a session with our expert genealogist and start uncovering your family's unique story.

Café & Gift shops

Treat yourself to lunch at our café followed by some retail therapy in the gift shops!

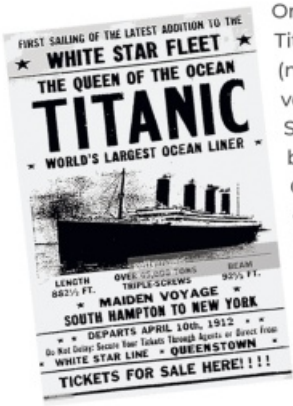


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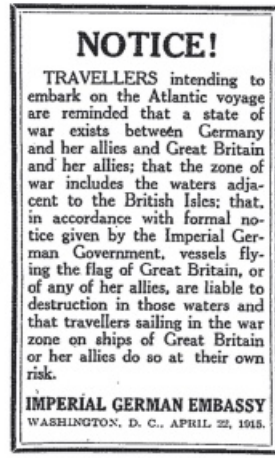
ABOUT TITANIC & COBH



On the 11th April 1912 the newly built Titanic called to the port of Queenstown (now known as Cobh) on her maiden voyage. Titanic had set out from Southampton and called to Cherbourg before continuing onto Queenstown. On 11 April 1912, the Titanic left Queenstown with 1,308 passengers and 898 crew members as she embarked on her final journey. Colourful and informative displays will take you back in time to learn more about the Titanic.

ABOUT LUSITANIA & COBH

On May 7th 1915 the Cunard liner Lusitania was en route from New York to Liverpool, having maintained her Atlantic passage service despite the outbreak of war. The liner, with 1,959 people on board, was about 16 Kms (10 miles) off the Old Head of Kinsale and travelling at 18 knots when she was struck by a torpedo from a German submarine U20. Once damaged, the Lusitania quickly listed to one side, making it difficult to launch lifeboats. A few days earlier the German government had taken warning advertisements in the American newspapers. Cobh was at the centre of rescue efforts and launched a flotilla of rescue boats, saving 761 people.



NOTICE!

TRAVELLERS intending to embark on the Atlantic voyage are reminded that a state of war exists between Germany and her allies and Great Britain and her allies; that the zone of war includes the waters adjacent to the British Isles; that, in accordance with formal notice given by the Imperial German Government, vessels flying the flag of Great Britain, or of any of her allies, are liable to destruction in those waters and that travellers sailing in the war zone on ships of Great Britain or her allies do so at their own risk.

IMPERIAL GERMAN EMBASSY
WASHINGTON, D. C., APRIL 22, 1915.

ANNIE MOORE



Learn all about Annie Moore, the first emigrant ever to be processed at Ellis Island on 1 January 1892. A statue of Annie Moore and her two brothers is located directly outside Cobh Heritage Centre. Find the full story of Annie Moore, her early life, her voyage and her life of hardship in New York.

All stories are beautifully told at the Cobh Heritage Centre.

COBH HERITAGE CENTRE
THE QUEENSTOWN STORY

Travel to Great Island and Cobh

There are several options for travel over to Great Island and Cobh. There is a bridge when travelling east from Cork, take the R624 through Fota Island and onto Great Island.

Buy tickets here!

You could also catch the car 'Ro-Ro' (roll on, roll off) ferry from Glenbrook ferry port from the R610 south of Cork which takes you to Passage West, Carrigaloe port just above Cobh. Tickets for foot passengers with bikes are €3, cars €10, vans €13 return. Service is non-stop daily and operates until 21.30pm

Or travel by Irishrail, their destination stations are Mallow, Cork, Little Island, Glounthaune, Fota, Carrigaloe, Rushbrooke, Cobh, Carrigtwohill and Midleton. At time of printing, a return adult ticket from Cork to Cobh is €6.90. This is a very regular service, 7 days a week and takes less than half an hour.

Find your train



An event was held in Cobh, organised by Cobh Tourismon May 11th this year to commemorate the 110th anniversary of the sinking of the Lusitania. The ceremony started at the Lusitania graves in the Old Church Cemetery, followed by prayers and musical honours by the Commodore Male Voice Choir.



Cobh

Fun Facts:

- Cobh was ranked as one of the most beautiful small towns in Europe by Condé Nast Traveler.
- Laurel and Hardy visited here in 1953, who's signature tune 'Cuckoo Waltz' was played at St Colman's Cathedral when they arrived!
- Infamously, Anne Bonny travelled from Cobh in the early 1700s to the Caribbean and became a pirate during the 'Golden Age of Piracy'!




Cobh Victorian bandstand

- The port has had three names, it was first called "Cove" in 1750. Then was renamed by the British as "Queenstown" in 1849 to commemorate a visit by Queen Victoria to Ireland. In 1921 when the Irish Free State was established the name was changed to Cobh, in its Irish form


Cobh Cathedral

- Today, Cobh has the only dedicated cruise ship berth in Ireland.
- The Cathedral took over half a century to build!

Passage West

The development from a tiny fishing village to a town is mainly due to Passage Wests safe anchorage. The channel above Cork was fairly shallow, so vessels over 150 tons would discharge their cargo here which were brought up the river or taken in carts. You can see where it got its name! A new quay was built in 1836 in Cork, so ended the importance of Passage as a port. Passage West has a maritime museum to learn all about its history.

- There was a flat bottomed ferry between here and Carrigaloe, worked by a system of pulleys. During 1836, over 20,000 people crossed by this ferry!
- It was popular until the railway line opened from Cobh and a car ferry service opened in the 1990s.
- In the 19th century, there were two 'baths', hydropathic establishments which were very popular until the railway was extended to Monkstown and Crosshaven, which took the tourist trade away from Passage.
- Passage West Rowing Club has won several gold and silver medals in all-Ireland rowing finals and is one of the oldest rowing clubs in the area.
- Outdoor gym equipment, beaches and a playground are available for some bracing ocean air.

Fun snippets of things to do

- Passage West is only 20 minutes from the city
- There's a new monthly Market across from Passage West Creates
- There is a flat greenway walking trail from Passage West into Harty's Quay, Rochestown which takes about an hour



Passage West Greenway

- Cycle (or walk, 16 minutes) to Glenbrook to catch ferry to Cobh or Fota
- Passage West Creates also run workshops and events
- Caffeine fixes at Cú and Bean & Leaf
- A walkway going to Douglas from the rowing club or bike to Blackrock Castle
- Taxis available from Riverside Cabs

Spike island

In the last 1300 years **Spike Island** has been host to a 7th century Monastery, a 24 acre Fortress, the largest convict depot in the world in Victorian times and centuries of island homes. The island's rich history has included monks and monasteries, rioters and redcoats, captains and convicts and sinners and saints.

Read about Little Nellie

Today the island is dominated by the 200 year old Fort Mitchel, the star shaped Fortress which became a prison holding over 2300 prisoners. It was the largest prison in the world at the time and there has never been a larger prison in Ireland or Britain before or since.

Read about some of Spike Islands inhabitants, Little Nelly who is the reason all Catholics have communion at aged 7 and Jack in the Box, a trickster thief!

Read about Jack in the Box

Karen Minihan launched a new book this past St Brigid's Day, entitled More Extraordinary Ordinary Women. The date was apt, Brigid was a woman venerated in her time, who founded the ecclesiastical city of Kildare and ruled benevolently over a vast monastic empire, but still lost out as Patron Saint of Ireland. We now have a brand new public holiday in her honour, which I'm sure would please all the women in Karen's two books, dedicated to the extraordinary, ordinary women.



photo: Thank you to roaringwaterjournal.com for this information

The stories are fascinating, and Karen has worked tirelessly to bring us these stories of ordinary lives which made such a difference for Ireland.


County Cork
KANTURK
BALLYHASS
CHARLEVILLE
BUTTEVANT
DONERAILE
TO MITCHELSTOWN
BALLYVINTER
BALLYHOOLY
MALLOW
TO KILLARNEY
FERMOY
MOANBAUN WOODS
BLARNEY
GLANMIRE
GLOUNTHAUNE VILLAGE
CARRIGTWOHILL
MIDLETON
CASTLEMARTYR
KILLEAGH
YOUGHAL
LITTLE ISLAND
FOTA ISLAND
BALLYNACURRA
LOUGHCARRIG
MACROOM
COACHFORD
RIVER LEE
CUH
WILTON
BALLINCOLLIG
FARNANES
LISSARDA
OVENS
WILTON
BLACKROCK
PASSAGE WEST
GREAT ISLAND
COBH
CLOYNE
GARRYVOE
BALLYMALOE
SHANAGARRY
CASTLEMORE
AHERLA
CROOKSTOWN
CLOUGHDUV
THE VIADUCT
CORK AIRPORT
BALLYGARVAN
SPIKE ISLAND
BALLYCOTTON
BALLINHASSIG
CARRIGALINE
HALFWAY
FIVEMILEBRIDGE
CROSSHAVEN
INCH BEACH
INISHANNON
BANDON
BELGOOLY
To GLENGARRIFF
To KINSALE
Youghal Golf Club
Midleton Distillery
The Retreat Country House
The Blackbird
Inch Hideaway
Long Quay House
Blarney Castle
AFTA
Paddywagon Tours
ECCLES Hotel
Heritage Centre
Hibernian Hotel

Midleton

Midleton is a historic town just 25 minutes from Cork City, (also a regular bus from Parnell Place) which used to have a 12th century monastery which was unfortunately destroyed in the 19th century.
There is a well known distillery, in a beautiful 18th century building, which is open to visitors for tours.



Midleton is traditionally the main market town in the area with a huge variety of stalls at their Saturday Farmers Market.



There is a wonderful sculpture, named 'Kindred Spirits', commissioned in remembrance of the generosity of the Choctaw people who kindly sent food aid to Ireland during the famine.



Midleton to Youghal Greenway has finished phase one and is open as far as Mogeely village, from Midleton station along the former railway line. Over time, information will be added along the way letting you know about the biodiversity and things to do.
There is a car park, drinking water fountains and bicycle repair stations at each end.







VISIT WHERE JAMESON IS MADE AT MIDLETON DISTILLERY EXPERIENCE

Home to some of the world's most awarded Irish whiskeys – Jameson, Redbreast, Midleton Very Rare, Powers, The Spot Whiskeys and Method and Madness – the passion behind every drop lives here. Taking visitors on a journey from past to present – with flagship distillery and behind-the-scenes tours, prestige portfolio tastings, cocktail making masterclasses and an Irish Whiskey Academy – Midleton Distillery Experience features a broad range of fun, interactive and immersive experiences, all fully hosted around the original distillery grounds across a 15-acre site.

The flagship Midleton Distillery Experience Tour brings visitors face-to-face with world's largest pot still, while the Behind-The-Scenes Tour lifts the curtain on many unique areas of the distillery, including the Cooperage and the Distillers Cottage.

There is also the opportunity to visit one of Midleton's original Whiskey Maturation Warehouses to learn about the Angel's Share and to draw, and taste whiskey straight from a cask. The new Midleton Cocktail Class offers a fully interactive experience where guests craft (and enjoy) specially curated seasonal cocktails from start to finish, using the finest Irish whiskeys and local ingredients, guided by expert mixologists in the custom-designed Kiln Bar.

For aficionados seeking a more in-depth educational whiskey experience, the Discoverer Academy immerses participants deeper into the production process, from grain to glass. The unique craft behind the Midleton Distillery Collection, Irish Distillers' full portfolio of Irish whiskeys, is brought to life through interactive and sensorial experiments before a visit to the production site – where every drop is made.

While soaking up the magic of the Midleton Distillery Experience, guests can peruse the Distillery Shop for exclusive releases or personalised gift sets, before enjoying a leisurely lunch in the Malthouse Café, or a signature drink – neat, on the rocks, shaken or stirred - from the Signature Cocktail Bar.
Midleton Distillery Experience is a one-of-a-kind whiskey experience, immersing visitors in a world of rich heritage, craftsmanship and unforgettable stories. While pre-booking is recommended for tours and tastings, there is no ticket required to enjoy the bar, café and distillery shop.

Visit **midletondistilleryexperience.com.**

Get the facts. Be DRINKAWARE Visit drinkaware.ie



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Castlemartyr

The castle, from which the village of Castlemartyr takes its name, was first built in 1210 by The Knights Templar and is now a ruin. Castlemartyr House was built in the 1700s.
Traces of ancient civilisations and from the Bronze age have been found, with barrow mounds in a group. There are ringforts near the village, circular earthworks used as dwellings and for farmed stock where early inhabitants defended themselves against wild animals and maurauders.


Photo Credit: Castlemartyr Resort

In January 1965, the Rolling Stones stopped off in the village, some had tea at Mrs Farrells eating-house and Mick Jagger and Keith Richards had a drink in Barry's bar across the road.

There have been two All-Ireland winning Hurlers from Castlemartyr, Ted O'Sullivan (1920 – 1968) and Liam Dowling (1931 – 1996) The author of Gothic novels and founder of the literary periodical 'Hesperian Magazine' Anna Millikin (1764 – 1849) also hailed from the area.

Ladysbridge

1.5km south of Castlemartyr is Ladysbridge, connected by a way-marked trail which crosses the nearby Womanagh River over a pedestrian bridge. Ladysbridge boasts The Thatched Inn, a lovely looking place which serves food and has live music.
Ladysbridge Tidy Towns is a sub-commitee of the Ballymacoda Ladysbridge Community Council, whos aim is to make Ladysbridge an even nicer place to live in.



FUN, FOOD, WELLNESS & LUXURY on the Cork Coast

There aren't many places which can compete with the Cork Coast of Ireland for stunning scenery, woodland walks, secluded beaches and now, luxurious saunas after your chilly dip! With food trucks nearby in some places, as we're always hungry after a swim!

Some luxury, very different accommodation along the coast and some lovely, quirky things to do.

SWEDE SAUNA

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Ballymaloe

Ballymaloe House started life as a Norman Castle around 1450. The house today was built into the castle turret in the 17th century. Myrtle and Ivan Allen bought the farm in 1947 and Ivan modernized it. They raised six children there, while Myrtle taught herself to cook, in order to feed her family and the many hungry farm hands. In 1964, Myrtle put a discreet ad in the Cork Examiner, inviting guests to eat at the house. From this, in 1975, a farmer's wife became the first female in Ireland to earn a Michelin Star.

Myrtle and Ivan had 22 grandchildern and 39 great-grandchildren, many of whom still live and work near Ballymaloe House. Many of the grandchildren set up businesses using the same ethos of sustainability and supporting local, which was the cornerstone of everything done at Ballymaloe by their grandmother.









The four businesses, just a short distance from the original house are *The Ballymaloe Shop and Café, selling gifts and serving homemade cakes and beverages. *The Ballymaloe Grainstore, a venue catering for larger events and the *Ballymaloe Cookery School, an award-winning cookery school and organic farm, run by Darina Allen, set in the midst of a 100 acre farm and extensive gardens, open to the public.

*Ballymaloe Foods, founded in 1990 by Yasmin, daughter of Myrtle and Ivan, produces the award-winning Ballymaloe Relish, loved by all of Ireland and beyond!

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FIND THE SEALS

How many Seals like this



can you find in this Visitor Guide?

Shanagarry

Shanagarry is famous for being the birthplace of William Penn, founder of the US state of Pennsylvania.
Also famous for its pottery and a cookery school. Visible from the church grounds is a Penn House – a fortified house, or castle, with parts originally built in c.1450, with additions made through the centuries, the latest being 1990. There is a crenelated tower house and a three-bay, 2 storey house(c.1650) and carved limestone copings on the gable front.

Garryvoe

There is a tower in a field on private land just east of the village a castle, which has partly collapsed. It may have been part of a larger structure, as there are stones sticking out of the northern and eastern walls which point to this. Also nearby, is the ruin of the medieval Parish church of Garryvoe.

Garryvoe blue flag beach is great for swimming and walking, it is sheltered in Ballycotton Bay and although you can be at your depth quite quickly, there is enough shallow water for children to play in. The beach is formed from sand with some rocks and lifeguards are on duty in the summer. Public facilities are nearby and good parking, there is wheelchair access onto the beach and a childrens play area. Dogs must be kept on a lead. Ballycotton island has a striking lighthouse which can be seen from the beach on clear days.



View of Garryvoe Beach from the Garryvoe Hotel

There has been a hotel here since the early 1900s, now a large one with 25m pool open to residents and members only. The Samphire Restaurant is open to non-residents and they serve a really good quality menu.

Ballycotton

Ballycotton is a small, picturesque fishing village with sandy beaches just 40 minutes from Cork City. Taste fresh fish from award-winning restaurants or the gluten-free chip shop, the fish coming straight from boats in Ballycotton Harbour.
There is live music every weekend, traditional pubs and a Pitch 'n Putt. With cliff walks and swimming, you can get a real breath of fresh air here.

The Blackbird has a dog-friendly, family beer garden with great food served from their Field Kitchen served Thursdays to Sundays and Bank Holidays. Live music and friendly staff all in a traditional Irish pub, open Wednesdays to Sundays.





Photos: Ballycotton Sea Adventures



Eleven Dog friendly forest and beach Walks around Cork County

1. Moanbaun Woods, Watergrass Hill, off M8 towards Fermoy
A fairly flat, quiet trail with options of just over an hour or an extra half hour for a longer walk through beautiful woods. Watch out for adjoining farmland in places with no fences

2. Marlogue Woods, Great Island
A beautiful forest recreational area is to be found at the far east point of Great Island. With tranquil forest walks, wheelchair accessibility and the long stretch of peaceful lapping water of the estuary shore, get away from the bustling towns and relax for a while.

3. Curragh Woods, Midleton
A little longer, more adventurous route which takes about 1.5 hours. Keep dogs on a lead as there are some unfenced farmland areas. Mountain bikers have been seen using these routes too, so keep an eye out for them.

4. Ballyannane Woods, Midleton
A moderate loop walk, 2.3km which takes about 50 minutes round the perimeter of the wood. There are forest trails and old carriage paths with specimen Lime and Beech trees from the old estate.

5. Pigeon's Wood, Castlemartyr Trail loop
A short 15 – 20 minute walk past the ruined castle, great for a quick dog exercise.

6. Glenbower Woods, Killeagh
With a car park by the childrens play park near the old Mill, and another at the forest entrance. This trail has bridges crossing the river to allow you to take a shorter route (watch out for sheer drops on the bridges, if with children or dogs!) otherwise, this takes about 1.5 hours. It can be muddy, so good footwear.

7. Youghal Beach
Dog friendly but please keep all dogs on a lead and pick up after them

8. Garryvoe Beach
Dog friendly but please keep all dogs on a lead and pick up after them

9. Rostellan Woods, east of Cloyne
This loop walk is tidal dependant and part easy, part through fairly dense forest. It takes about 45 minutes

10. Curraghbinny Woods, Crosshaven
An hours loop walk with car park, picnic area and fantastic views across Cork Harbour, Cobh and Spike Island.

11. Farran Forest, west towards Macroom
This trail goes near the Zip-it park and dogs must be kept on a lead, as there is plenty of wildlife – deer, birds. You pay for parking here but there are toilet facilities and a picnic site. Two walks available, one of half an hour and easy, a second takes an hour and leads you by the lake.

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Cloyne

Even though Cloyne is just a small village to the east of Midleton, it has a cathedral! Bishop Berkley, (which Berkeley in California was named after) a famous philosopher, was Bishop here for 30 years. In 560BC, St Coleman founded his monastery here, built on a network of caves with secret underground passageways. Meadow of the Caves is Cloyne's personal fairy goddess: Mor. Cloyne.

The Cathedral and climbable round Tower can be visited by requesting a key from the key keeper within the grounds.
The original castle was built in the 17th century, but was probably demolished to allow for several rebuildings. Castle Mary was held by the Longfield family since the 17th century. An Italian called Daviso Dacorte was asked to rebuild the roof of the Castle in the late 1750s – he then went on to design Mayoralty House in Cork (now Mercy Hospital).

You can still see the remains of a Druid altar near the orchard. There is a statue in Chapel Street of Christy Ring, winner of All-Ireland senior hurling medals, 4 National leagues and many Munster medals and titles.



Just 15 minutes walk from Inch beach, is a Glamping and Eco Camping site, which has insulated yurts with real beds, stove, private gardens, picnic area and a very cute wagon.
There is a self-catering kitchen, dining area, pizza oven and camp firepit. Massage, yoga and other therapies are also available.

Nearby are a surf school, stand up paddling, outdoor activity centre (kayaking, obstacle courses, etc.). You can enjoy the ambience of walking at Inch Beach, White Bay, Roches Point through cliff walks.

Youghal



Some inhabited houses in Youghal date back from the 1600s, and with ancient town walls, the Walter Rayleigh and Moby Dick pubs and a greyhound track, there is plenty to see.

In December 2024, the 23km Midleton to Youghal greenway, for walkers and cyclists was completed, which runs through the heart of east Cork, linking Midleton Train Station for rail connections to the rest of the country. Access the greenway from Youghal's MacCurtainstown car park, the greenway connects at Mogeely, Killeagh and Midleton Station.

On Sunday 3rd August, Youghals Medieval Festival will be held at St. Mary's College Gardens & St. Mary's Collegiate Church, 11am to 5pm.

Moby Dick Film (1956) an adaption of Herman Melville's novel was part filmed in Youghal. Many locals were employed as extras on the film and were paid 30 shillings a day. This was a huge boost to the local economy.

Youghal Eco-Boardwalk is a hardwood panelled beach walkway, is 1.9 km in total which links in with the promenade and footpaths so visitors can explore all three beaches.

Fun things to do in Youghal

- 10km and half marathon on Sunday 10th August
- Just an hours drive from Cork city
- Three Blue Flag beaches and 5km of beaches!
- Preserved Marshlands along The Slob Bank and Ballyvergan
- Thrilling off-road and on-road cycle routes
- Horse riding and sunrise yoga on the beach
- Fishing from the quays
- Parkland Golf course
- Open water to Surf, Kayak or Paddleboard
- Boat charter for deep sea diving or fishing
- Beach sauna
- Youghal Clock Gate Tower, where you can join an entertaining costumed guide who'll take you on an immersive journey through the tower's five floors

Youghal experienced Viking raids from the end of the 9th century. They entrenched themselves at Eo-Chaille in 853AD, as recorded in the 'Annals of Youghal'. Shortly after their arrival, a violent storm changed the course of the Blackwater river, channelling out a new course which formed Youghal Harbour. Here the Vikings built a fortress and laid the start of a commercial sea-port. The faint etched outline of a Viking Longboat is on a stone slab in the Boyle Chapel of St Mary's Collegiate Church.

In the Middle ages, Medieval Youghal developed on a narrow strip of land on the west side of the estuary. A wall was built around this trading centre as the town began to prosper in the 13th century. The main streets remain today as North and South Main Streets. Also in this century, St Mary's Collegiate Church was constructed, which is used to this day for national and international performers as well as for religious worship. Two monastic houses: a Franciscan monastery (but this doesn't stand above ground now) and a few fragments of the Dominicans Friary are still present.



Youghal's Medieval Walls

There is an impressive walled garden not far from the church, which traces its origins back to the mid-15th century.

The town traded goods such as fish, wool and timber to Bristol and other ports of Europe in Medieval times and exotic spices, glass, ironmongery, clothes, salt and wine were imported.

In the 17th century, it was such a major centre for export of wool, that Cork City became known as 'the port near Youghal'

In the early 18th century Youghal grew to twice the size of the original Medieval town and better ship berthing and warehousing was required so the Town Corporation began to lease parts of the waterfront with the agreement that the local merchants were to build new quays outside the line of the old town and harbour wall, with multistorey warehouses being built to accommodate the large amounts of goods. Clock Gate Tower was built in 1777, and is part of the Medieval Town wall.

Harvey's Dock, Nealon's Quay and Green's Quay were named after the merchants who built them and remain today.

Nowadays, the medieval harbour is in-filled and lies below the Market Square.

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Texaco: Carrigrohane Rd, Cork T12 KV6K
Circle K: Main St, Ballincollig P31 HX54
Texaco: Bishopstown, Cork
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Circle K, Rochestown | CHAdeMO/fast CCS/fast Type 2/med open 24hrs
51, South Mall, Main St, Cork | Type 2/med open 24hrs
Dolphin's Place, Youghal | CHAdeMO/fast CCS/fast Type 2/med open 24hrs
3 De Vesci Place, Monkstown | Type 2/med open 24hrs

Tyres (all closed on Sundays)

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Killeagh



There is an ancient woodland in a glen in Killeagh, called Glenbower woods, which was in the ownership of the DeCapell family for 750 years, they lived in Aghadoe House. There used to be tennis courts in the wood, used by the DeCapell family and a corn mill was situated behind the 'Old Thatch' pub, which took its power from a lake in beautiful parkland which unfortunately was devastated in 1989 when the dam was breached and the lake was drained on the grounds of public safety, leaving an unsightly wilderness with treacherous mud banks.

The huge Sequoiadendron giganteum trees (Giant Redwoods) are native to California but can be found in these woods.

You may have tasted some delicious vegetable crisps while in County Cork, and these may well have come from a local farm in Killeagh, Joe's Farm Crisps. They make these tasty crunches from their own potatoes, beetroot and carrots and you can buy them from their Farmshop or online at **joesfarmcrisps.ie.**



Joe's parents used to sell their own spuds and carrots at local farmers markets back in the 80s, so if you were visiting at that time, you may have met them!

Carrigtwohill

Carrigtwohill derives its name from a huge rock, which is half a mile NE of the town. The rock is honeycombed with caves, some extending for miles underground, where you can find stalactites. One cave is named The Goat's Hole, as legend has it that a goat entered a cave and reappeared a few miles away in Ballintubrid.

Carrigtwohill boasts some well known caves under the limestone Rock, written about since 1749. In 1933, Mr J.C. Coleman set out with others to explore them and found a chamber 32 feet long and around 10 feet high. Removing some boulders at a fissure, they found a steep, clay passage about 34 feet long. To the left there was a very low passage, hung with stalactites and in some places, this 22 foot long, 4 feet wide tunnel was only 14 inches high! The original gallery was completely blocked by large deposits of stalagmite, and this tunnel was formed when the clay and sand which comprised the old cave floor were washed away by waters which formerly ran through the cavern.

A water pool on a stalactite with a chimney giving access to a high level chamber was reached after a taller passage, and on the left was a gallery over 60 feet long. Many more passages and chambers have been found, which have been explored and mapped by the Cork Speleological Society. Check out more history here: **www.carrigtwohillcommunity.ie/history/carrigtwohill-caves/**



There is a 12th century castle, Ballyscourt Castle, which was rebuilt in the 16th century, then refurbished in the 1990s. Tours can be taken to view it in the summer.

Farmers Market Days in Cork



Credit to Coal Quay Farmers Market

Tuesdays

Wilton 10am-2pm

Wednesdays

Ballincollig 10am-2pm

Kinsale 9.30am-2.30pm

Thursdays

Mahon Point 10am-2pm

Saturdays

Coal Quay Food Market 8.30am-2pm

Douglas 10am-2pm

Bandon Farmers Market | 9.30am -1.30pm

Sundays

Blackrock Village Sunday Market 10am-2pm

Other Markets

The English Market | 8am-6pm Mon-Sat

Marina Market | 8am-12pm Mon-Sun

Mother Jones Flea Market | 10am-6pm Fri-Sun

The Boatyard, Cobh | 8am-7.30pm Mon-Sun

Glanmire

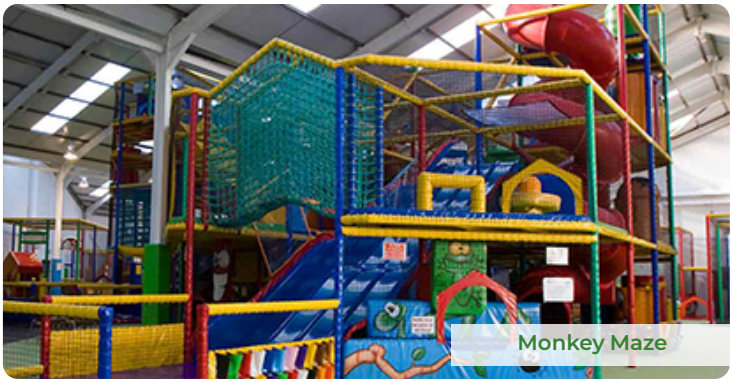
Originally an early Christian settlement, with a church dating back to 1291, Glanmire became industrial in the 1800s, with woollen factories and mills on the river Glashaboy.


Photo: Lakemount Gardens

The stone bridge located in Riverstown is one of the oldest constructions in Cork.

Only 9km from Cork City, Glanmire has the tranquil Lakemount Gardens to visit by appointment only and the excellent Castle Glanmire, who have bands at the weekends and trad music sessions during the week. They also host special events like outdoor BBQs, family fun days, quiz nights on Wednesdays and music in the marquee.

The town also has a garden centre and the Riverstown Country Market operates on Friday mornings, to pick up fresh produce and tasty treats.


Monkey Maze

Take the little ones to Monkey Maze to run off some energy!

The Glanmire region is about 7km east of Cork City and is in a valley made up of four villages, Glanmire, Riverstown, Sallybrook and Brookland. Two rivers flow through the valley, Butlerstown and the Glashaboy estuary, on which Glanmire village is situated, joining at Riverstown. The area is surrounded by beautiful woodlands, which have been celebrated by a song named 'The Groves of Glanmire'.

There is a regular Bus Éireann route, no. 214 from CUH to Knockraha, which passes through Glanmire, Riverstown and Brooklodge. Or the no. 245 Parnell Place, Cork city to Clonmel also passes through the villages.

Watergrasshill

A number of standing stones and ringfort sites give evidence of ancient settlements in these townlands. There were two churches; the Church of the immaculate Conception, which was completed in 1895 and the Church of Ireland in the village of Watergrasshill, built in 1820 but deconsecrated in 1990 and is now used as an Arts venue.
There are a number of bars and restaurants and a nicely laid out playground.

Tir na Sí Farm is named after the Irish word for Fairy Mound, you may see fairies, and if not there are friendly farm animals to pet, a farm express train and play areas to explore.

The largest producer of Bord Bia Quality Assured Eggs in the Munster region, have seven family owned and run farms supplying Riverview Eggs in Watergrasshill.



At Adventure Park, you can try your hand at Karting, Paintballing, Archery or Laser Tag. As well as Sumo-suit wrestling! They have 'Pitstop Restaurant' for burgers and rolls and also take groups.

150 years ago, Watergrasshill was known as Kilshanahan and Ard-na-Gaoithe. The name today is taken from 'The Hill of Watercress Stream' and the watercress which grew in it, flowing from Tinageraph to Riverstown. Watercress was used more extensively back then, used for sickness by old native doctors, making a compound herbal medicine. People came from miles away to use this particular herb for medicine and also as a vegetable.



Watercress

Fermoy

Over 150 miles long, the River Blackwater is one of the longest rivers in Ireland, and Fermoy, a planned town, designed in the 1790s, incorporates it into its streetscape. Well known for its salmon, trout and coarse fishing, anglers come from all over the world to fish here. It is a 40 minute drive from Cork City or the 245 bus from Parnell Place in the city will take you there.

A Scotsman, John Anderson bought the lands around Fermoy in 1791. This entrepreneur developed the roads and started the mail coach system in Ireland. The streets remain near enough the same as when he designed them. He is immortalised by a plaque and bust at the entrance to the town park which was unveiled in 2001. The expansion of the town started when the British Army built Fermoy Barracks, on land given to them by Anderson in 1797, for which he and the town received economic benefit. Two permanent barracks were built, eventually providing housing for 3000 men and 152 horses and was the largest military establishment in Ireland by the 1830s. Fermoy town expanded around the facilities which were in British hands until 1922, when the Irish Free State was established.

The lower part of Fermoy flooded regularly, until the most expensive flood prevention works carried out in Cork were completed in 2015.

The Barnane riverside walk starts from Fermoy's Ashe Quay to Glenabo Wood. It's a very peaceful walk alongside the river with trees. Once you arrive at Glenabo Bridge, follow the Avondhu way marker which takes you to the car park for the Glenabo loop walk, which follows the river. If you want a longer walk, carry on to the Avondhu Way, which soon takes you on a 5km stroll along quiet country lanes around the foot of Corrin Hill. If you head uphill to the junction, then west it will take you to Fermoy Golf Club, take a left and you will find the car park for the hill and a forest track to the summit, from where Fermoy spreads out below you and there is an excavated burial mound. There are two annual regattas held by Fermoy Rowing Club in May and early September.
'Fermoy Goes Country' Festival is to be held on 17th August 2025 at Fitzgerald Park.

The Palace Theatre in the town, provides entertainment for all the family. There are numerous cafés, bars and restaurants, even one serving delicious Portuguese food is called 'Welcome Portugal Shop and Café' with a stock of Portuguese food in the shop.

Mitchelstown

A 7th century settlement was established in the nearby town of Brigown before Mitchelstown was developed. 'Villa Michel', a 13th century Norman settlement was the base for Mitchelstown, which was granted market rights. By tradition, there is a market selling everything from garden items, clothing and produce every Thursday with stalls and car boots. Market Place Restaurant is nearby, where you can also eat outside.

The original town evolved from cabins and laneways built around the 14th century castle, built by the White Knights. Kingstown College area was built by James King, whose 10 year old granddaughter inherited it on his death. She married her cousin five years later and together they orchestrated projects such as the longest park wall in Ireland, 10km long enclosing 15 hectares and took 16 years to build.

The medieval town was demolished and the present day two main streets, intersected by a grid formation was built. Some of its streets are named after members of the King family. The castle was rebuilt in the early 19th century and was occupied by the Irish Republican Army in 1922 for six weeks, during which time it was looted then burned. Local men were killed by police in the 'Mitchelstown Massacre' in 1887 in a demonstration held over two men being tried over rent strikes. A memorial to the three men who died was unveiled in 1906.



Mitchelstown Cave, discovered in 1833 is actually in County Tipperary but just 15 minutes drive from Mitchelstown itself. It was discovered accidentally by Michael Condon who was quarrying limestone when he dropped his crowbar into a crevice. He stooped down to pull out a few boulders to retrieve the bar, next minute he found himself looking down into a vast series of underground chambers, passages and caverns. You can buy your ticket at the farmhouse near the entrance to the cave and there is a guided tour.



Open all year round, **Blarney Castle** is an unusually large tower house, a type of fortification built by Gaelic lords and the Anglo-Irish in 1446, the second tower added in the 1500s. Tower houses are typically four or five storeys tall with one or two main chambers, plus several ancillary chambers on each floor.

The walls are 18 feet thick at the base, gradually sloping inwards as they rise. This makes the building more stable but would also have helped with defence: when an object was dropped from the top it would bounce off the wall on the way down and fly outwards into the enemy.



Blarney Castle & Gardens is the first estate in Ireland to be awarded the prestigious title of 'Wildlife Estate' from the European Landowners' Organisation.
The native woodlands, rivers and lake within the inner estate and also in the separate pockets of ground around the village area, provide support for many increasingly rare species including otters, red squirrels, badgers, barn owls, buzzards, kingfishers, river lampreys, trout and salmon.
There are many walks among the 75 acres of beautifully planted gardens, the woodlands, where you might see red squirrels and the blue flash of jays, the 45 minute walk round the lake, home to waterfowl and the riverside where, if you're really lucky, you might catch a glimpse of otters and kingfishers.



Blarney Stone

Home to the famous Blarney Stone, which has the traditional power of conferring eloquence on all who kiss it. The term 'blarney', meaning beguiling but misleading talk, gained currency during the 16th century as the MacCarthy of the day attempted to fend off the demands of Queen Elizabeth I.



Scan me!

Watch the Blarney Stone Video



Blarney

Blarney is a lovely town with a square, which is a grass field located in the centre of town, and was formerly used for markets.
Bus Éireann, Bus 215 links Blarney to Cork every half hour and also the less frequent Bus 235.



Formerly known as Mahony's Mills, Blarney Woollen Mills was a water-powered mill producing woollens and tweeds.
It close in the early 1970s and was re-invented by Christy Kelleher, a local entrepreneur, as a gift shop, which is extremely popular with tourists. Adjoined to the gift shop is Blarney Woollen Mills Hotel, also popular.
I have stayed here several times, the food is really excellent and not over-priced and the breakfasts are fantastic (try their wild mushrooms on sourdough toast!). Rooms are clean, fresh and spacious.



There is a lovely river walk just a few minutes from the hotel with a clear path, perfect to walk off your breakfast or exercise your dog.

Until 1934, Blarney had its own narrow gauge railway.
There was a proposal in 2016 for a new station at Blarney which is now planned for 2026.
Of course the biggest draw to Blarney, is the castle and the lucky Blarney Stone. Read on to find out all you need to know about this iconic structure.

Paddywagon Tours offers a fun and immersive way to experience the beauty and culture of Ireland. Known for their expert guides and well-planned itineraries, Paddywagon provides a range of tours that showcase the best of the country, from vibrant cities to scenic landscapes.



On their **Blarney & Cobh Half-Day Tour**, you'll visit two of Cork's most iconic spots. Begin at **Blarney Castle**, where you can enjoy the castle grounds and gardens. Then, head to the charming seaside town of **Cobh**. Whether you're on a full-day adventure or a half-day getaway, Paddywagon Tours offers a comfortable and enjoyable journey. With tours available nationwide, it's the perfect way to see Ireland's highlights and immerse yourself in its beauty and history.



Ballincollig

Ballincollig Royal Gunpowder Mills was established in 1794 by a Cork citizen, Charles Leslie. The site was taken over in 1805 by the British Board of Ordinance and transformed into one of the most up to date complexes in Ireland in the 19th century. Finally closing in 1903, the site has become a huge park covering 103 acres, with many ruins of former buildings used to manufacture gunpowder dotted around. It is open daily and has scenic walking routes, colour-coded by length, by the River Lee, woodland and waterways. Dogs are permitted on the trails on a lead. There is outdoor fitness equipment and a skate park at the western end of the park for public use.

In 2023 Ballincollig won their 11th gold medal at the Supervalu Tidy Towns awards and also Ireland's Tidiest Large Urban Centre and the County award for Cork South West. Out of 887 entries, they were in the top three. They have created a Fairy Trail in the Regional park with Fairy doors and plaques.

A military barracks was built in the early 1800s to protect the supplies of gunpowder but is now the Ballincollig Shopping Centre, still preserving some of the original buildings within it. You can still see the high stone walls of the barracks on the north side of the main street.
A Medieval castle ruins can be seen to the south west of the town from the Ballincollig by-pass.



Lime kilns were used to burn limestone to create lime for fertilisers and mortars. One used in the 1860s can still be seen as rubble stone walls with a round-headed arch near a former quarry when you are heading west on the R608, on the left just before Coolroe Meadows.

Buttevant

The French word for stronghold is Buttevant and this medieval town was founded by the De Barry family in a similar fashion to those found in Normandy, France. In the early 13th century, there were two castles, a friary and a market house. In the 14th century, town walls surrounded around 15 hectares of land. These suffered in raids over the next few centuries and large parts of the medieval wall were destroyed. A small part of the wall can still be seen by the towns GAA grounds and also by the friary.

Buttevant has an 18th century Church, by the ruins of the 13th century friary and the crypt of the De Barry family. Barry Castle is privately owned and Lombard's Castle which was built in the 14th century by Italian wool merchants and tax collectors. You can see many of the walls along Buttevant's streets today



Lombard's Castle, Buttevant

The original market house now has an 18th century market house on the site. St John's Church was the starting point of the world's first steeplechase.

Ballybeg Abbey ruins contain one of the best preserved dovecotes in Ireland. The Augustinians kept 365 birds as an easy source of meat inside of the circular tower.

Buttevant Heritage Group hold walking tours of the town every Saturday during the summer months. Just meet them at 3pm outside St Mary's Church on Main St.



Doneraile

Doneraile Court is set in a 166 hectare landscaped parkland and wildlife estate, with Kerry cattle, sika, fallow and red deer who graze here. There is a walled garden and beautiful water features. The gardens are set in the naturalistic style of Capability Brown.

The house is open with guided tours between March and October, 10am and 4pm. There is a café open 7 days a week and a children's playground. The park itself is free to visit between 8am and 8pm in the summer and 8am and 5pm in the winter.



Doneraile Court

Located on the banks of the Awbeg river, the house was built by Arthur St Leger, father of the renowned Lady Freemason (who became the world's first female Freemason in 1712) on the site of a ruined castle in the 1640s and 13 generations of the St Leger family lived here over 3 centuries and bred horses to race.

In 1752, two locals raced their horses from Buttevant Church to St Mary's Church in Doneraile, from steeple to steeple, creating the Steeple chase races as known today.

Other improvements within the estate included cottages, lodges, farm buildings and stables. The St. Leger family owned and bred horses for hunting and racing on the estate.

The last renovations were carried out in the 19th century, which is how the house looks now. The St Leger family lived in it until 1969, when it was sold to the Land Commission, then the OPW took stewardship of it in 1994. The kitchen wing is now home to Doneraile Court Tearooms. The park was the most visited free tourist attraction of 2023.

Mallow

Mallow's 13th century Castle ruins, a 16th century fortified house remains and 19th century mansion all stand in a 33 acre site for visitors to explore.

The Town Hall, on the junction of main street was once a theatre, then became Mallow Library. The building was renovated in 2013 and the tourist office was on the ground floor. Then in 2016, a grant was given to redevelop the building as an arts and cultural hub, giving a 150-seat theatre, bar, café and studio and workshop spaces - however, so far nothing has been done and the building is closed, some money allocated went into the Mallow Bridge Boardwalk.

The Spa House was renovated in 2022. This 200 year old building was constructed over a spring well which kept its temperature at 72'F, and was one reason tourists came to Mallow in the 18th century. It was built in the style of a Tudor house, with baths, a reading room, a pumproom and apartment for medical consultations. It is now home to the town's new Tourist Office.



The Spa House, Mallow

Built in 1855, the clock of the Clock Tower in Mallow was brought from the old Mallow Castle. The tower is a good example of a half-timbered Tudor construction but the bell tower was removed in 1970 as it became dangerous but was restored in 1996, along with restoration of the entire building, again more recently. At one time the building was a licensed premises and sometimes housed art exhibitions. You can admire the building from the outside but it is not open to the public. There was a statue of 'The Little Man' over a water-trough but to preserve it from modern day traffic, this has been moved to the Spa Park.

The 'Horse and Riders' famous statue by Michael Quane was moved to a new site adjacent to the N20 dual carriageway (Cork side) from its previous site on Annabella roundabout, which saw major works in 2016.

Coachford

The name Coachford comes from once being a crossing point over a stream for horse-drawn coaches in the 1800s. You can still see this stream today. The village itself is only just over 200 years old and has seen land, farms and houses submerged when the newly formed lake of the River Lee was created for hydroelectricity. In days gone by it had a courthouse, a train station (until 1934), a bakery, a fair day, a grain mill and a creamery by the end of the 19th century.
During the famine, the village developed rapidly, as it was a centre of relief within the mid Cork area and by 1888, it had a light railway terminus.

In its short history since 1821, it has also seen bridges built, developments in agriculture, technology and transport. Now with shops, schools, sports clubs, a church, pubs and is the site of an international fishing venue. Coachford Community College was established in the 1950s as a Vocational School.

Lohort Castle near Cecilstown was built in the 12th century, a five storey fortified tower, about 80 feet high. One of its owners was a character named Sir Timothy Carew O'Brien, living there from 1898. He raised ten children there and rather enjoyed his role as country squire – a fiery tempered man with fiery red hair, who was the first person in Cecilstown to own a moter car! He was an international cricketer for the Ireland team and also the England team, playing into his 50s. He also hunted with the Duhallow Hunt, Cecilstown, the oldest in Ireland, which existed before 1745.
When looked at from above, the castle is surrounded by a neat octagon of hedges.



Mullinhassig Waterfall

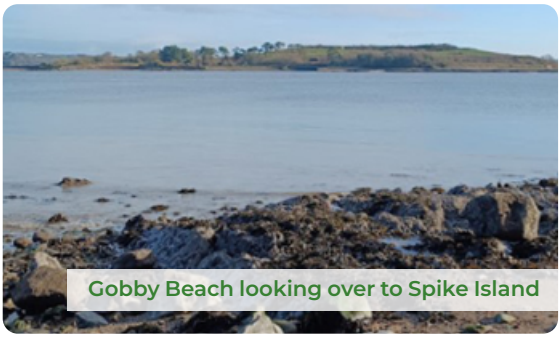
Mullinhassig Waterfall is about 5km west of Coachford, and 1.5km south is Rooves Bridge on the Bandon road, constructed in the 1950s over the River Lee to replace the old bridge, which was also submerged about 10km down river at the Inniscarra dam. This new bridge is the longest to span the River Lee.

Ringaskiddy

South of Cobh, and just 15 minutes from the city, Ringaskiddy village is home for sailings between Ireland and France. Ringaskiddy handles imports of vehicles brought into Cork for most of the southern part of Ireland. The M28 motorway planned to connect Cork to Ringaskiddy is said to start at the end of 2024.

Once just a fishing village, industry made use of the position of this harbour and by the 20th century it had become the centre of transport and industry. One of the largest employment hubs of the pharmaceutical industry in the area for Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline and Centocor among others. The area employs roughly 4,000 people.

A Martello Tower and other forts and towers sit on the hills of Ringaskiddy, built to protect Cork harbour. The ruins of Warren's Castle is nearby, built in the 15th/16th century on the site of an Anglo-Norman castle. Then in the late 18th century, the Warren family built a mansion house on this site.



Gobby Beach looking over to Spike Island

Lough beach, sandy with shallow water and Gobby beach, rocky but with great views over to Spike Island are nearby.

History of the Port of Cork

The Port of Cork is one of Ireland's most historic and significant maritime hubs. Its origins trace back to the early medieval period, when Cork was established as a Viking trading port in the 9th century.



The natural harbour provided a strategic location for trade and commerce, facilitating Cork's growth as a prominent maritime centre.

Throughout the Middle Ages, Cork's port continued to thrive, bolstered by the export of wool and agricultural produce, and the import of wine and other goods. The 17th and 18th centuries marked a period of substantial growth, with the port playing a critical role in trade with continental Europe, the West Indies, and North America. By the 18th century, Cork was a bustling trade hub, particularly known for provisioning ships with butter, beef, and other supplies.

In the 19th century, the port underwent significant infrastructural development to accommodate larger vessels and increased traffic. The construction of deep-water quays and docks facilitated the expansion of trade routes and the diversification of cargo. The establishment of the Cork Harbour Commissioners in 1814, which later became the Port of Cork Company, marked a pivotal point in the port's administration and modernisation.



The 20th century saw further evolution, with the port adapting to the changing demands of global trade. During both World Wars, Cork's strategic location made it an important military and supply base. Post-war, the port expanded its facilities and services, becoming a vital component of Ireland's economic infrastructure.

Today, the Port of Cork Company is a dynamic entity overseeing modern port operations, including container and bulk cargo handling, cruise tourism, and logistical services. Its rich history and ongoing development continue to underscore Cork's status as a key gateway for international trade and a vital part of Ireland's maritime heritage.

Carrigaline

Still referred to as a 'village' by locals, though the population of Carrigaline is around 16,000, they feel it is still a small area.
In ancient times, agriculture was the main industry, then corn and flax growing encouraged development of mills in the 19th century.
In 1928, Carrigaline Pottery and the Co-op were formed, now the new 2000 Co-op building is the largest nationally.
Famous for its Pipe Band, who have participated all over Europe and has a good bandstand next to the Church.
A lios (fairy fort) can be found near Owenabue Heights and there is evidence of pre-historic settlements along the edge of the shore.



Currabinny Woods are about 6km away, walking down the Coolmore road. Coolmore was built in the Georgian period, built in 1788 to a simple rectangular design with no flourishes. At the entrance to Coolmore are four lodges in the Gothic Cottage style in 1815 forming a crescent around the wrought iron gates. On to Carrabinny Woods, which are mainly deciduous, so beautiful in the autumn and these paths were originally laid for horse and carriage so they are nice and wide! Known locally as 'The Giant's Cave', there is a pre-historic burial cairn at the highest point, which isn't in a great condition. The woods are on a peninsula, looking out over the water towards Crosshaven and in the distance, on the other side, is Spike Island, then Cobh. The walk takes about three quarters of an hour.

Along the old railway line, you can walk to Crosshaven, about 5km away, following the Owenabue River all the way to the harbour. There are benches and water stations and plenty of wildlife and birds to spot. Signage along the way tells you about the history of the railway.



Royal Cork Yacht Club, founded in 1720 and the 1st recorded yacht club in the world.



Drakes Pool, just beyond Crosshaven, where in 1589, Admiral Sir Francis Drake hid the Englich Fleet from a larger French Fleet, who didn't realise there was enough water to hide them further up the river.

Belgooly

- A statue called 'His Master's Voice' is on the west side of town
- It has an agricultural show at the end of May each year.
- Bus number 226 travels to Kinsale from Cork city centre via Belgooly
- There is a dog friendly 3.7km trail walk along the river
- Footgolf, Cork is 6 minutes south of Belgooly

Ballinaclashett

- Killmonogue Beach has just under a kilometre of golden sands, with bathroom facilities and is dog friendly with free parking and a restaurant nearby
- Oysterhaven Beach is about half a kilometre of more golden sands, also has bathroom facilities and is dog friendly, with free parking and with calm waters

Nohoval

- Nohoval Cove is a charming, small, secluded beach reached by a narrow road with cliffs surrounding it. You will see the ruins of an old slate mine.
- The area surrounding Novohal is full of abandoned old lime kilns



Nohoval Beach

Wilton

Personally, when I think of Wilton, I think of going to the great shops they have here, as it is easy to get to from West Cork, good, free parking and just opposite Cork University Hospital, so convenient if having to pay a visit there! My daughter bought me a giant Giraffe from there who looks out at my garden majestically. As well as filling our bags with inexpensive clothes, stocking up at Tescos, as it is our nearest one from West Cork, there is an opticians and café, as well as plenty more places to spend our cash.



Cork University Hospital

Opposite the shopping centre is CUH, constructed in the early 1970s, then called the Regional Hospital. It officially opened in 1978. In 2001, work began on constructing the Cork University Maternity Hospital, which opened with 144 beds in 2007. A new Regional Cancer Centre opened two years later and three years after that, the hospital's Cardiac Renal Centre, costing €85 million to build, was opened.

The hospital has been using nearby sporting facilities as a helipad, with plans being afoot to build its own dedicated helipad at the northern side of the hospital and after 20 years, this will finally be accomplished at the end of this year!

Cork University Hospital is the largest HSE hospital in Ireland, and the only Model 4 (Academic Teaching) Hospital with all medical and surgical specialities, co-located on one campus with Adults, Paediatrics, Maternity, Mental Health & Dental Services.
The hospital has 800 beds and its own radio station, CUH FM.

Cork Airport

Cork Airport was opened in 1961 and had just over 10,000 passengers in their first year. During this decade, it was expanded to allow for more advanced aircraft and more destinations, with Aer Lingus flying to London, Manchester and Bristol. In March 1964, the first jet landed at Cork, a British Overseas Airways Corporation Comet. In 1978, new departure, arrival halls, check-in area and information desk were opened.



The main apron was extended in the 1980s with Aer Lingus flying to London Gatwick as well as Heathrow. Then in June 1987, Ryanair also commenced services from the airport and by 1989, the main runway extension of 300m was opened. The second phase of the terminal expansion was completed in 1994.

During 2001, a new hotel opened on airport grounds and new dual carriageway roads and a multistorey car park were made along with the construction of a new terminal which opened in 2006 and a new control tower was completed by 2009.

There was nearly a major catastrophe in 2011, when a man tried to ram a stolen vehicle into an Aer Lingus Airbus, after hitting several other vehicles and driving underneath a Thomas Cook stationary plane. Luckily, he stalled the car before he could damage the plane and was arrested.

Cork Airport was placed first for customer satisfaction in 2013 and the next year managed to reduce energy costs by 33%, six years ahead of target. Two years later it became the first Irish airport to launch a no-drone zone within 5km of the airfield. In 2017 and 2019, the airport was named 'Best Airport in Europe under 5 million passengers'

Airlines fly from Cork to many destinations across Europe and the UK. Last year saw a record 3.1 million people pass through its gates and they estimate there will be more than 3.4 million this year, 2025.


Cork Airport

I fly from Cork regularly and it is sometimes susceptible to fog but still better than the slog up to Dublin from West Cork!

EXPERIENCE

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Ovens

- There is an entrance to limestone caves near the bridge of Ovens, over the River Bride
- Some remains of the Castle Inchy can still be seen

Castlemore

- Castlemore (caisleán mór: big castle) or Dundrinun Castle lies next to the Castlemore Quarries entrance. Probably built in the mid-15th century, it was one of the MacCarthys chief seats in Muskerry. The remains are overgrown and growth prevents entrance to the castle.
- Castlemore Quarries rock records the life of an active fault, where limestone formed 340 million years ago in tropical warm seas has been fractured repeatedly during earthquakes and mineralised. Fracturing is seen as grey fragments joined together by dolomite, a cream coloured mineral. The quarry is still being used.

Aherla

- Siobhán McSweeney, known for the Derry Girls and Great Pottery Throwdown was born here in 1979
- There are a craft shop, supermarket, pub and café

Cloughduv

- The village of Cloughduv has a pub, a shop, a church and the former Cloughduv Creamery closed in 2018 after 126 years in business
- It has a hurling club and GAA

Castlenalacht

- There is a lovely lake here
- The stone row at Castlenalact is perhaps the largest and finest such monument in County Cork. Four stones form a row which is 13.5m in length, the longest in Cork. The stones are graded in height from 3.4m down to 1.9m and are aligned ENE-WSW.



Photo credit: Grace Donoghue

Castlenalacht Standing Stones

Crookstown

South of Crookstown is the ruin of Clodagh Castle, which was built in the 16th century and the village itself lies between the rivers Bride and Brouen and was flooded in 2012 when the rivers burst their banks. The village once had a railway station, on the line from Cork to Macroom, but like all the others, it was closed down many years ago. Nowadays you can catch the number 233 bus from Cork to the village. There is a brick and concrete factory at nearby Castlemore now but a large mill, built in 1810 at Bellmount was once very important economically to the village.

Crookstown House is home to one of the farmers who keep Hereford cattle and is part of the Irish Hereford Prime group. The O'Mahony family bought the farm in 1923 and it is worked by the grandson, Niall along with his father, who is in his 90s! The house was originally built in the 1750s and some of the trees from that time still line the avenue through the farm, Dutch elm disease killed the elms but beech and oak still remain. Also on the land are Japanese chestnut, lime, horse chestnut, oak, sycamore, scots pine, ash, alder and holly. New trees are planted annually and any that are cut down are used by local producers for wood turning and whisky barrels. They work hard on the farm to ensure a high level of biodiversity and environmental growth and health.



Hereford Cattle

Hereford cattle are quiet, easy to manage and thrive well. The Irish Hereford Prime is known for its flavour and quality, I remember when I first moved here 15 years ago, being told to make sure I bought Hereford meat! Though I live on Cape Clear Island, who farm their animals outdoors all year round, and that meat is incredible too - must be the tranquillity of the island and the views! An international survey commissioned by Bord Bia revealed that consumers would pay more for beef from grass-fed cattle. When the cattle at Crookstown have to be taken indoors, during the winter months, they are fed a mix of silage (cut from their farm), barley and protein in the form of distiller's grains, which they source form Midleton distillery.

Macroom

Macroom, as hundreds of other towns, began as a primitive settlement on the banks of a river, in this case, the Sullane. The town is rich in archaeological artefacts such as gallauns, stone circles, dolmens, cist graves, ring forts, fulacht fiadhs and souterrains. There are even a couple of canons on the impressive town square.

Macroom has been campaigning for decades for a bypass, and since it has been opened in December 2023, the town has been transformed from the bottleneck of the past, when it was choked by 700 HGV trucks daily and diesel fumes, to a clean, friendly quiet town again. The residents are delighted that the air quality has doubled and to now be able to hold a conversation with their friends and even make a phone call on the street! Costing €280 million it has totally changed the town back to its former glory.



The principal trade used to be corn and there was a weekly market of this and also a weekly pig market. Nowadays the country market is held in the GAA centre in Macroom every Tuesday from 11.15am-1pm and gives people the opportunity to buy local produce that is freshly harvested or made.

There are numerous shops, bars and cafés in Macroom, really great places to eat, hotels and a large public park featuring many items of gym equipment. Grab a picnic from one of the takeaway eateries, grocers or supermarkets.

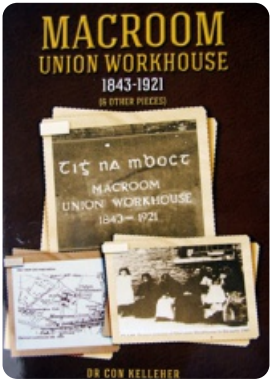
Tiny Feet Fairy Garden opened in Masseytown on the lst Sept 2018, set up by Macroom Tidy Towns and Cork County Council on an acre of ground, alongside the River Sullane. A magical place for all age groups. The Park is open 24/7, all year round.



The Great Irish Famine of 1845 – 1852 desecrated rural Ireland, with a drop of almost 47% population from 1841 to 1911. Macroom's population shrank by nearly 64%, a drop of over 37,000 people!

Macroom's Union Workhouse was opened a couple of years before the famine in 1843 and survived until it was burned in 1921 by the Irish Republican Army. The workhouse saw a lot of tragedy with deaths and suffering, especially through the famine years. Between 1847 and 1849, a quarter of all Irish workhouse residents died and almost 4,000 people were resident in Macroom's workhouse and its two auxiliary workhouses in June 1849.

The workhouse had its own mortuary and graveyard and an additional building was erected during the famine to accommodate another 46 people in a 'fever hospital' and also another building was hired to accommodate a further 60 souls. The former site of the workhouse is now the place on which the Macroom Community Hospital is built.



If you are interested in reading more about this, a Macroom resident, Dr Con Kelleher, who worked as a GP here for 32 years, has written a book entitled Macroom Union Workhouse 1843 – 1921. This book can still be purchased in several places in Macroom, it is full of facts and also other interesting pieces about the town. Another book has been written by Máire Mac Suibhne entitled Famine in Muskerry.

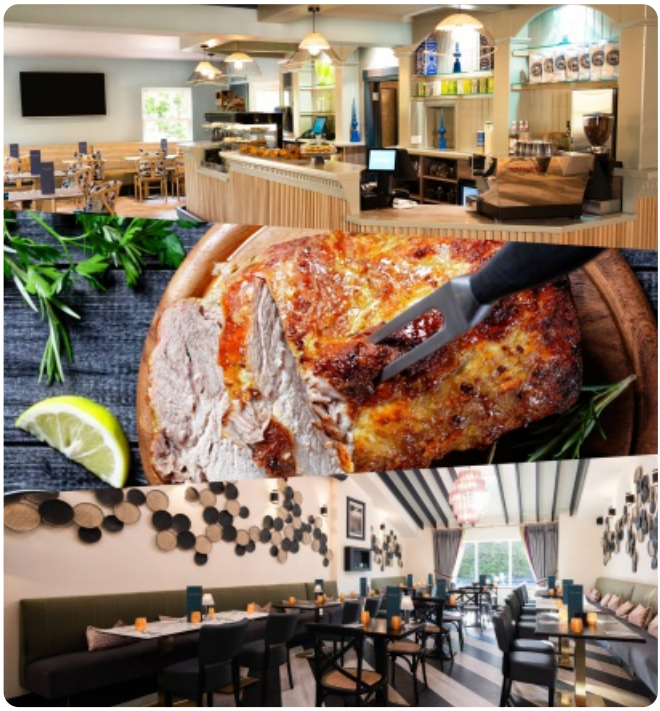
The Viaduct

The Viaduct is a very impressive structure, just 3 minutes off the Bandon Rd Roundabout on the N71, and only 15 minutes from the city centre and is one of Cork's important landmarks. Standing 91 feet high with four 110 feet wide arches, it used to carry one of Ireland's largest railway networks, the Great Southern and Western Railway in the early 20th century. It was designed by Charles Nixon and building was completed in 1851 by the same company who built Crystal Palace in London. Badly damaged in the Irish Civil War in 1922, it was fully repaired but closed in 1961.



The Viaduct

The Viaduct Inn, built just beside the Viaduct, originated in the 1990s, then became part of the Cliste Hospitality family, having a major redesign and refurbishment, it re-opened in 2022 as a modern Irish brasserie. Its close proximity to Cork City makes it a very popular destination for city people as well as the surrounding areas of Bandon and Kinsale, as it has changing menus with the seasons and excellent food.



Rumley's Open Farm is a unique working farm experience and is an excellent day out for all the family. Just 3km after The Viaduct coming from Cork. The farm has a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities for children of all ages and has many domestic animals, with 2km of walkways, petting zone, tractor drawn trailer rides, zip lines and more. **www.rumleysfarm.ie**

Ballinhassig

Just south of Rumley's Open Farm is Ballinhassig, which sits near the source of the River Owenabue (meaning Yellow River) The village has seen economic growth and many new houses were constructed as it became a place within easy commute of Cork city. There are a number of prehistoric ringforts around the village. It is said that the Lord Deputy of Ireland camped locally with an army of 4,000 troops the night before the Battle of Kinsale in 1601. When the railway ran from 1849 to 1961, Gogginshill Tunnel was built in 1851, which is now the longest abandoned railway tunnel in the Republic of Ireland.

Halfway

Halfway is a village 2.5km south of Ballinhassig village, so called as it is half way between Cork and Bandon. A steam rally club is situated in Halfway, which is 2.5 km from Ballinhassig village, a village so named as it is halfway between Cork and Bandon.



Every June Bank Holiday, you can see steam engines, tractors, fire engines, vintage farm ma-chinery and rural crafts, with over 1,000 exhibits.Sheep trials, a dog show, and road rolling, this is one for your diary for 2026!

Innishannon

A large village, which can sometimes be a bit of a bottleneck when travelling to West Cork, is a great place to stop off and have a bite to eat. There are several great places - we discovered The Found Out Café this spring, and the lunch food was superb! Rohus Country Market also sells tasty food and produce. The Quirky Kitchen is just 1.3km out of town, turn right at the lights (if coming from Cork direction) I haven't eaten here, but I hear it serves great coffee!

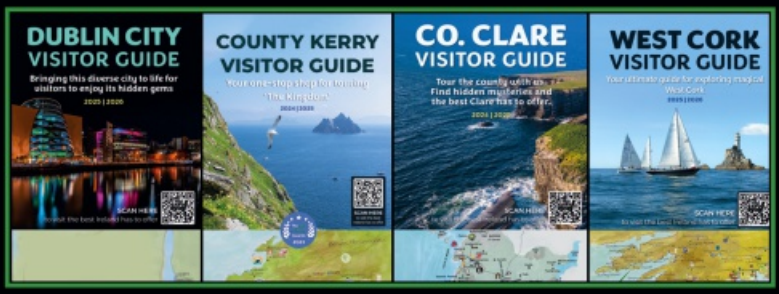


There's a filling station and supermarket at the top end of town, another supermarket in town along with a bakery, Wildflour, which also sells coffee, and Macau Asian Fusion Restaurant which closes late. And Supercrust, who deliver pizza!

It is situated on the River Bandon and has a tower, which is the ruin of Huguenot chapel built beside the original church and graveyard, St Mary's which is now abandoned in favour of a 19th century church. The tower had a serious collapse in 2007 and the locals campaigned to have it restored. The care of the tower is now in the hands of the Tidy Towns Committee since 2013.

The de Barry family had control of the town and it was used as an important ferry crossing point over the River Bandon in Medieval times. In 1256, Innishannon received a market and fair grant and was given a royal charter in 1412.

Population has fluctuated in the town, having 650 people in 1837, 319 in the 1991 census, and trebling to 907 in the 2016 census.



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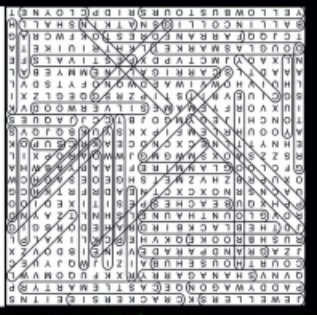
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1	7	4	6	5	2	9	3	8

There are 5 Seals!



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Bandon

In 1604, Bandon was formed by English settlers who came from various parts of England, all Protestants, as a by-law had been passed stating that “no Roman Catholic be permitted to reside in the town”! There was a protective wall of about a mile around the town and it is said that written on the gates of Bandon at this time was a warning “Entrance to Jew, Turk or Atheist; any man except a Papist” A response was scrawled under the sign noting: "The man who wrote this wrote it well, for the same thing is writ on the gates of hell."

Bridges linked settlements either side of the river and Christ Church, Kilbrogan is the oldest church in Bandon and the oldest purpose built post-Reformation Protestant church in Ireland. St Peter’s Church was built in 1847, St Patrick's Church opened in 1861 (built on the grounds of an original church built in 1614) and Bandon Town Hall in 1862.

The railway system and industries such as tanning, brewing, distilling, milling or cotton and corn saw a growth of the town in the 19th century, the Allman’s Distillery, now closed, producing over 600,000 gallons of whisky annually.
Michael Collins, the Irish Army leader, was killed at Béal na Bláth, nearly 15km from Bandon, in an ambush.

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Bandon is twinned with Bandon, Oregon in the US, which was founded by a native of Irish Bandon, Lord George Bennet in 1873. He presumably didn't know in advance that when he introduced gorse to the US it would have disastrous results!

You can reach Bandon by bus number 236 or 237 from Parnell Place in Cork city in about 40 to 50 minutes, this costs (at time of print €6.25 per adult) Maybe worth getting the bus out to Bandon on a Saturday as it holds its well-known Farmer's Market in the Old Market Garden from 9.30am to 1.30pm.

West Cork Heritage centre is open from May to September and can be found in Christ Church in the town. A review stated: "This is an authentic exhibition, eclectic with sometimes donated items, housed in a deconsecrated church. There's something to discover at every turn and the helpers are genuinely interested in visitors and making your visit enjoyable. It's not spoon fed... you have to explore"



Bandon is a fairly large town, with plenty of parking at the Riverview shopping centre which has supermarkets, a jewellers, An Post, opticians, a sports shop and cafés. Also parking at St Patrick's church, which is near the new Bandon shopping centre.

There are plenty of walks in Bandon, one at Bandon Woods, an easy route of about 40 minutes. Clare O'Leary's Walk is so named after the first Irish woman, Dr Clare O'Leary, to reach the summit of Mount Everest in 2004. She is also the first Irish woman to climb the seven summits and ascend Ama Dablam in the Himalayas. There is a cycle and walk way almost connecting to the walk, connecting to the Graham North Riverwalk.

Bandon Walled Town Festival, August 2024. Bringing Bandon's Living Heritage to life! There is a fascinating website that contains much more information than I can give you, so read it all by scanning this QR code.

Scan me!

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The charm of West Cork lies in its variety. One moment you can be looking out across the Atlantic; the next, you are enjoying a quiet village street, a traditional pub or a conversation with a local who knows the area inside out. For visitors, a hotel here is more than simply somewhere to sleep - it can be the base from which the character of the region unfolds.

In an age of increasingly hurried travel, West Cork offers something increasingly valuable: time, space and a chance to reconnect with the simple pleasures of place.

