



whatever you're into...



intokildare.ie



Welcome to Kildare!

County Kildare has been attracting people for centuries, from mythical warriors and saints to polar explorers and Hollywood legends. So, you are in good company as you sample the richness and variety of the county's heritage and its modern vibrancy!

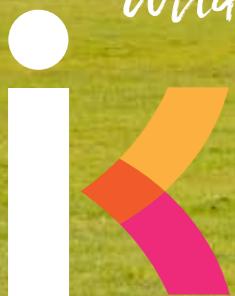
Take part in great festivals, horse-racing, motor-racing and enjoy a warm welcome as you explore our towns and villages. Experience the county by foot or bicycle, ride a horse, play golf, pamper yourself or do some shopping.

You'll find lots of inspiration in our guide – whatever you're into, we invite you to come into Kildare.



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whatever you're into...
into
KILDARE



The Curragh Plains

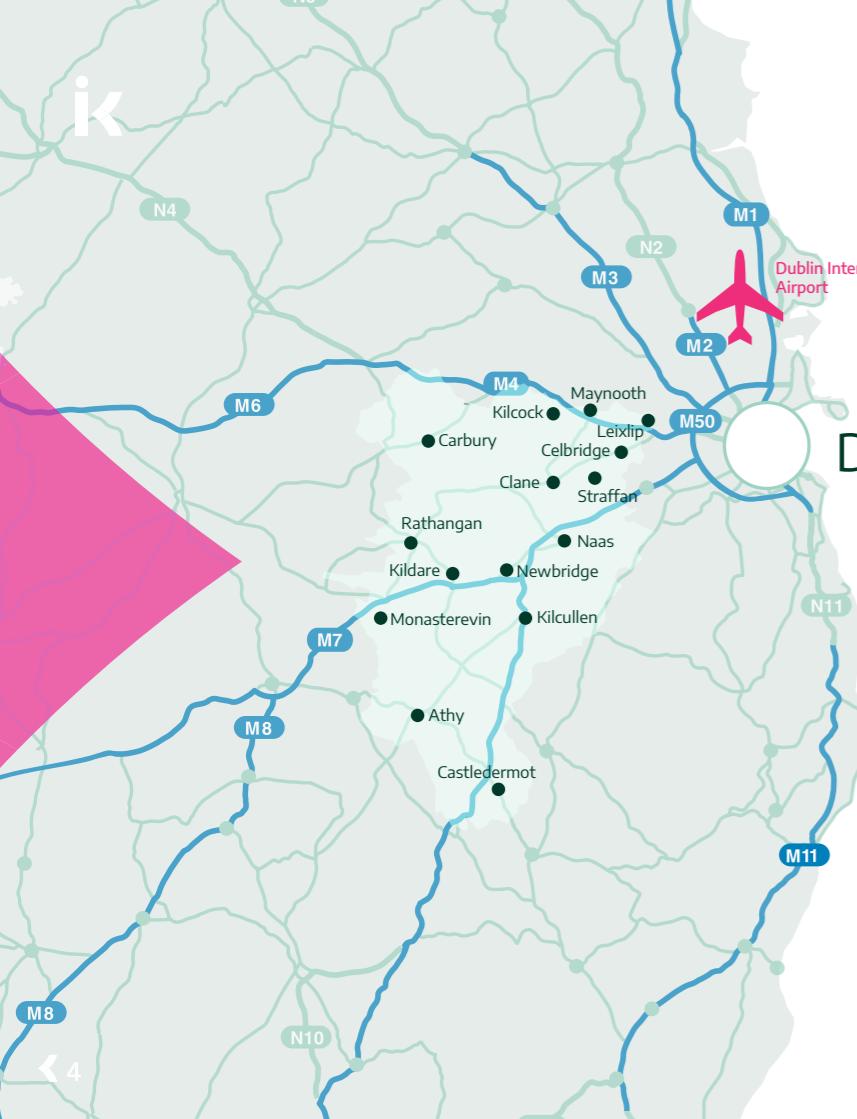
History and modern delights fuse perfectly in County Kildare – where else can you walk in the footsteps of saints, Arthur Guinness' birthplace and get to grips with the latest in motor technology at Ireland's only Formula One-style motor track?

At the centre of Ireland's Ancient East, the entirety of County Kildare is steeped in history from every era – here you can see where Fionn MacCumhaill and his Fianna raced their horses, walk the same paths as St. Brigid and St. Patrick, see how 18th century Irish gentry lived in their big houses, and even visit the birthplaces of such modern-day heroes as polar explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton!

As well as history, County Kildare has plenty to offer. We are home to some of Ireland's best hotels, golf courses and spas, as well as a whole host of great family attractions. This brochure will introduce you to just a few of them – so what are you waiting for?

Time to get into Kildare!

into kildare.ie



Dublin



getting into Kildare

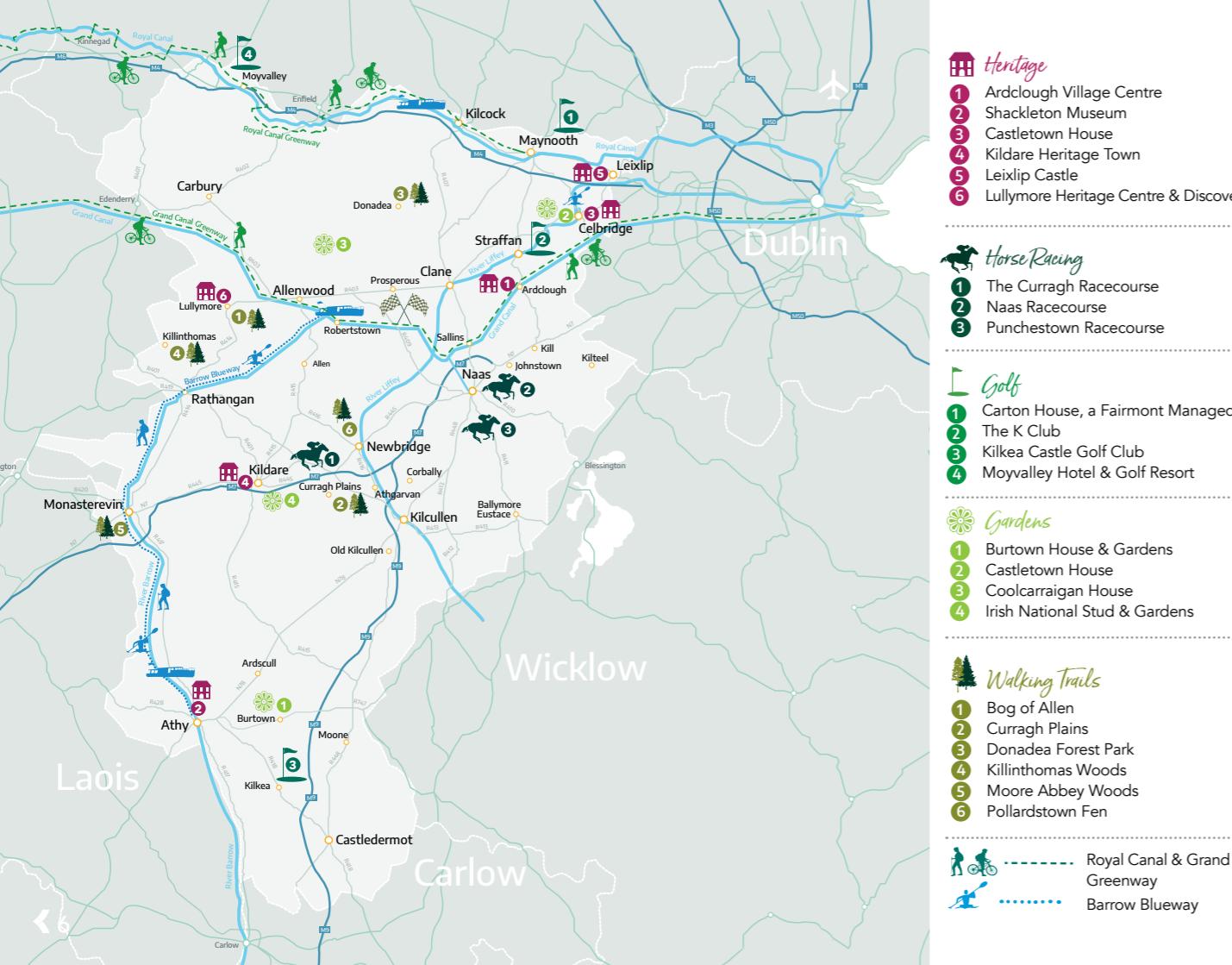
Getting to County Kildare couldn't be easier. The county borders Ireland's capital of Dublin and offers excellent transport links from Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford by motorway, train or bus.

Driving is the best way to discover Kildare. Several motorways run through the County connecting to the M50 in Dublin, giving easy access from airports and ferry ports. County Kildare is directly accessible from both Shannon Airport and Dublin Airport by motorways; in fact, Dublin Airport is under 30 minutes from the county.

Dublin Bus, Bus Éireann and private coach services operate plenty of routes through the county, while the major urban centres of Naas, Maynooth, Celbridge, Kildare town and more have busy local train centres. Car hire is also available at entry points into Ireland and major cities and towns, including Go Rentals in Naas who can arrange for your car to be delivered to your accommodation.

To plan your journey visit
intokildare.ie





Heritage

- 1 Ardclough Village Centre
- 2 Shackleton Museum
- 3 Castletown House
- 4 Kildare Heritage Town
- 5 Leixlip Castle
- 6 Lullymore Heritage Centre & Discovery Park

Horse Racing

- 1 The Curragh Racecourse
- 2 Naas Racecourse
- 3 Punchestown Racecourse

Golf

- 1 Carton House, a Fairmont Managed Hotel
- 2 The K Club
- 3 Kilkea Castle Golf Club
- 4 Moyvalley Hotel & Golf Resort

Gardens

- 1 Burtown House & Gardens
- 2 Castletown House
- 3 Coolcarraigan House
- 4 Irish National Stud & Gardens

Walking Trails

- 1 Bog of Allen
- 2 Curragh Plains
- 3 Donadea Forest Park
- 4 Killinthomas Woods
- 5 Moore Abbey Woods
- 6 Pollardstown Fen



Royal Canal & Grand Canal Greenway
Barrow Blueway

what's in Kildare

Quite a lot actually....

From sensational golf courses, breath-taking scenery and some of Ireland's finest cuisine, to historic buildings, heritage trails and ancient structures, there's plenty to discover in County Kildare – whatever you're into.

County Kildare is renowned for breeding world-class thoroughbreds and at the Curragh, Punchestown and Naas racecourses you can enjoy the thrills of seeing these magnificent animals in action. We are also home to the Irish National Stud, where you can actually meet some of these prize-winning horses in the flesh and learn all about County Kildare's proud bloodstock heritage.

Kildare is also the centre of country pursuits, adventure, golfing and motorsports – not to mention beautiful countryside, forest and riverside trails and greenways to walk and cycle. Journey gracefully along rivers and canals or paddle your own canoe! For fashion lovers, Kildare Village, Ireland's only discount designer outlet, is a shopping experience like nothing else in the country. Visit one of our stunning gardens and take time to explore the lovely towns and villages off the beaten track.

It's all here waiting for you to get into!





K

into
horses

Irish National Stud
& Gardens

Known as *The Thoroughbred County*, County Kildare is quite simply heaven for horse lovers. But what do you do if not everyone in your family shares your devotion for all things equine? The answer is the Irish National Stud & Gardens, which has something for everyone.

The Irish National Stud has been Ireland's premiere stud farm for many years, and visitors can get up close and personal with the horses – guided tours are also available. The Stud also has a fantastic interactive visitor's attraction, the Irish Racehorse Experience – great for adults and children alike!

The Stud is also home to the exquisite Japanese Gardens, a peaceful oasis that tells the story of evolution in the language of trees, shrubs, plants and flowers. Don't forget to visit St Fiachra's Garden too, a different outdoor experience that pays tribute to the natural Irish landscape.

Kids getting impatient? Download a map for the Fairy Trail from irishnationalstud.ie, have fun in the playground, and take a break in the café.

For more information see intokildare.ie

Enjoy a race day at The Curragh, Naas or Punchestown. Each has a full calendar of events, from derby days to big-ticket race days. Make sure to dress up for Ladies' Day, a highlight for any fashionista.

into
heritage

St. Brigid's Cathedral & Trail



Great for history
buffs

did you know...

St Brigid shares her name with the Celtic goddess Brigid; both women are associated with poetry, healing, protection and smithcraft.

something else...

A name synonymous with the county is St Brigid, who founded a monastery called Church of the Oak, which when translated into Irish is Cill Dara – the Irish for Kildare.

Legend has it that St Brigid begged the King of Leinster for land for the monastery; she was granted only the amount of land that her cloak would cover. But when she spread out her cloak, it miraculously grew to cover the entire flat Curragh Plains. The monastery grew to become one of the most important foundations of Christianity in Ireland.

Visitors can follow in St Brigid's footsteps through the Heritage Trail in Kildare town. Begin at Kildare Heritage Centre on Market Square for the audio-visual introduction to the story of St Brigid before strolling to St Brigid's Cathedral and St Brigid's Church. Don't miss the Solas Bhríde Centre, a purpose-built centre dedicated to the spiritual legacy of St Brigid and the home to the week-long Féile Bhríde (Festival of Brigid) celebration every year.

For more information see intokildare.ie

Follow in the footsteps of world-famous brewer Arthur Guinness along Arthur's Way, a breathtakingly scenic 16km trail through the northeast of Kildare that takes in sites such as Leixlip Castle and the Lyons Estate.



K

into
shopping

Kildare Village & Newbridge Silverware

did you know...
When steel was virtually impossible to source during World War II, Newbridge Silverware recycled old tram lines from Dublin instead.

Great for retail therapy

something else...

Fancy a Stateside shopping experience without having to get on a plane? Head to Kildare Village, undoubtedly Ireland's premiere shopping destination. There's plenty of parking and space to stroll and shop – and believe us, you will shop! Kildare Village is home to approximately 100 designer outlets from some of the world's biggest designers. And the best news of all? Every store is offering up to 60% off the recommended retail price – every day of the year.

Then, take the short journey to Newbridge for the Newbridge Silverware Visitor Centre, where you can see first-hand the intricate craft of creating the famous sterling silver and silver-plated items in the factory tour. The centre is also home to the Museum of Style Icons, a free-to-enter museum that houses fashion collections and artefacts from such stylish people as Audrey Hepburn, Princess Grace and the Beatles. Permanent pieces include the blue and dusty rose-coloured chiffon jacket worn by Marilyn Monroe in the 1957 film The Prince and the Showgirl.

For more information see intokildare.ie

Visit Whitewater Shopping Centre in Newbridge, one of Ireland's largest retail centres. Make a day of it with a movie in the multiplex and lunch in one of its many restaurants.

Royal Canal Greenway

into
the slow lane



Great for families

did you know...

The Royal Canal came to Maynooth because the 2nd Duke of Leinster insisted the route passed through his town!

something else...

Don't forget that Kildare is also home to the River Barrow and Grand Canal. Linking with the Royal Canal, this makes a huge looped walkway or cycle route through our beautiful county.

County Kildare features some truly stunning water-side scenery, with the River Barrow, River Liffey, the Grand Canal and the Royal Canal all meandering through the beautiful countryside. There's plenty of opportunities for walking, jogging, biking, paddling and more along these waterways.

The Royal Canal is a 145km-long towpath that runs from the River Liffey in Dublin to Cloondara on the Shannon, with an 8km branch line into the town of Longford. The towpath has now been upgraded into a 130km Greenway from its entrance in Maynooth right up to the River Shannon, offering a wonderful off-road walking and cycling route for all levels of ability.

The Greenway is a great opportunity to discover some of County Kildare's most picturesque towns and villages beginning in the university town of Maynooth and weaving through Kilcock, Enfield and Moyvalley before heading further afield. Accommodation options on the route include Carton House, a Fairmont Managed Hotel, the Glenroyal Hotel, Moyvalley Hotel or Maynooth Campus Conference & Accommodation.

For more information see intokildare.ie

Mondello Park

into
high gear

PORSCHE

PORSCHE

Mondello Park

DRIFT GAMES EXPERIENCE

Great for an
adrenaline rush

did you know...

Formula 1 legend Ayrton Senna won the Leinster Trophy at Mondello Park in 1982, so you can literally race in the dust of international winners

something else...

Have you mastered every go-kart track and fancy yourself as the next Ayrton Senna, Michael Schumacher or Lewis Hamilton? Well, now's the time to prove yourself, as County Kildare is home to Ireland's only major racing car circuit, Mondello Park. Get ready to "rev up" the fun at this professional circuit, which is set in 100 acres of greenfield space and renowned throughout Europe as a major race circuit.

The track is now home to many excellent racing events throughout the year, including Car, Motorcycle, Rallycross, Drifting and Time Attack events. It's also the host of shows for Modified Cars, Classic Cars and Trucks.

But of course, the biggest question posed by motor fans is – can I take to the track myself? And the answer is a resounding yes. Wannabe racers can avail of a number of driving experiences (also great as presents) and corporate days out, ranging from Formula 1-style racing to supercars and drift games. You won't find a better adrenalin rush in Ireland.

For more information see intokildare.ie

Try your hand at kayaking at the various canoe clubs dotted throughout the county or take in a game of water polo; and for adventure fun for all the family, try stand up paddle boarding.



into
gardens

Burtown House & Gardens

Great for
green fingers

did you know...

Wendy Walsh, a famous botanical artist, moved many rare plants from her home in Lusk, County Dublin, to Burtown House.

something else...

Take a breather from the bustling town of Naas with a visit to Coolcarrigan House & Gardens, and 15-acre garden, which is full of rare and unusual trees and shrubs.

For more information see intokildare.ie

At the centre of Ireland's Ancient East, County Kildare is full of beautiful locations that allow you to walk in the footsteps of some of Ireland's most famous residents. A perfect example is Burtown House, a Georgian house with landscaped gardens originally designed by Isabel Shackleton, Sir Ernest Shackleton's first cousin and the wife of the present owner's great grandfather.

For keen gardeners and horticulturists, Burtown is a real gem. Follow the winding path as it takes you through the garden's many layers, including impressive herbaceous borders, shrubberies, a rock garden, a yew walk divided by a pergola, a sundial garden, an old orchard and a more formal stable yard garden. Make sure to visit the Nutgrove, a large woodland garden surrounded by water – a peaceful and restoring corner of nature complete with candelabra primulas, hostas, ferns and irises.

Leave time to stop off for lunch at The Green Barn, which is known for its delicious menu full of local ingredients in a stunning setting.

Festivals & Events

into
festival fun



KILDARE DERBY FESTIVAL
more than the race

something else...

Great for
culture vultures

did you know...

The name Curragh comes from the Irish word Cuirreach, meaning place of the running horse. Visit early in the morning to see them training.

Summer is a busy time in County Kildare, with plenty of events taking place all over the county. Look out for individual festivals in towns – everything from one-day music events and markets to participation in larger county-wide festivals.

As the centre of the horse racing world in Ireland, not surprisingly there are festivals in Kildare all year around – not just the summer. Some of the highlights include the Punchestown Festival every April, and the Derby Festival at the Curragh, three days of top-quality racing including the Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby.

If you're lucky enough to be visiting during the month of June, look for the many activities in June Fest. A week-long festival, June Fest includes events in music, arts, culture, nature, sports, heritage, history and more. Regular festival highlights include musical gigs, art and writing competitions, exhibitions, family fun days and history/heritage seminars.

For more information see intokildare.ie

Fans of real-life adventure flock to the annual Shackleton Autumn School, in the Shackleton Museum, which celebrates the life and achievements of Antarctic explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton.

into
something different



Creating Memories



Great for
new experiences

something else...

did you know...
The nickname for the
Kildare GAA team is the
Lilywhites, This is as a result
of early jerseys being made
from the bags of the
Lilywhite Bakery.

While many people like to discover County Kildare at their own pace, get a different view with Majestic Ireland Roadtrips, which arranges tailor-made luxury self-drive or chauffeur-driven itineraries across Ireland and elsewhere. The team will put together bespoke itineraries to suit your tastes, whether it's majestic castles and elite country houses, breath-taking scenic drives, exquisite local cuisine, sumptuous luxury or even some ceol agus craic.

For food lovers, Kalbarri Cookery School near Kilcullen, offers a unique cookery experience for all ages and abilities. Or unleash your creative side in the tranquil surroundings of Ballymore Eustace Art Studio. For younger visitors, Junior Einstein's will keep the children entertained with lots of super science experiments!

For more information see intokildare.ie

Immerse yourself in a real, and memorable, Irish experience with a sheepdog demonstration in picturesque surroundings with Michael at Irish Working Sheepdogs.



Taste of Kildare

into
good food

TASTE OF
KILDARE
#tasteofkildare

Great for
foodies

did you know...

According to Bord Bia,
Irish agri-food products are
sold in over 170 markets
around the world!

something else...

For food lovers, you really can't get a better location than County Kildare. To showcase the sheer amount of great restaurants in the county, the Taste of Kildare festival was launched in 2018 when visitors from all over Ireland and beyond flocked to the K Club to sample delicious menus from Kildare's leading restaurants, producers and suppliers.

As well as sampling the best of food and drink, visitors can enjoy cookery demonstrations, craft beer and wine tasting, and live music and entertainment. Plus, there's lots of activities for children, making this annual event a real draw for the whole family.

And it's a star-studded line-up every year, including events with some of Ireland's biggest chefs and food producers. Previous guest chefs included Rachel Allen, Mickael Viljanen, Mark Moriarty, Martin Shanahan, Thomas Haughton and Ross Lewis. In addition to renowned Kildare names such as Jordan & Majken Bailey from two-Michelin star restaurant Aimsir at Cliff at Lyons and Nicola and Josef Zammit from TwoCooks.

For more information see intokildare.ie

Kildare is not just packed full of great restaurants, it's also home to some of Ireland's top food producers. Try handmade chocolates from Lily O'Briens or a craft beer from Kildare Brewing Co – yum!

into
eco-tourism

Lullymore Heritage & Discovery Park



Great for families

did you know...

Past uses of the Peatland include ritual bog bodies, bog butter, turf-cutting and industrialisation, and currently for their unique biodiversity.



something else...

A real gem with something for every member of the family, Lullymore is a wonderful facility set over 60 acres of serene woodland and peatland trails. This award-winning park perfectly fuses together heritage and entertainment – perfect for getting the little ones to learn a little history while having lots of fun.

The Park is located in Ireland's most famous peatland, the Bog of Allen, and includes a trail that takes you through the rich history and stories of Lullymore's past. There are also many other heritage exhibits from important eras in Ireland's past, including the Famine House, Blacksmith's Forge, Hedge School, Fairy Bower and Theme Gardens.

Reward the little ones for their learning with Lullymore's tremendous selection of entertainment facilities, which include a large outdoor adventure play area and 18-hole mini golf, train trips, pet farm and a magical treasure hunt. Make a day of it with a picnic in the large eating area or visit the on-site café or shop. Warning – you need at least a half day to get the most out of Lullymore, so clear your diary.

For more information see intokildare.ie

Pollardstown Fen National Nature Reserve is Ireland's largest remaining calcareous spring-fed fen. Stroll along the boardwalk and take in the huge range of grasses, orchids, birds and animals that live in the fen.

We Care in Kildare

Family Trip

2 Night,
3 Day
Itinerary



Kildare Farm Foods



Athy Boat Tours



Killashee Hotel

Day 1

Begin your County Kildare adventure by exploring The Kildare Maze, Clonfert Pet Farm or Kildare Farm Foods Open Farm. Enjoy lunch at one of the many restaurants or cafés in Kildare Town before spending the afternoon at the Irish National Stud & Gardens. Check into Killashee Hotel, in Naas, a wonderful spot for families that offers plenty of activities for kids including a fairy trail and a kids' swimming pool. Dine in the hotel before a great night's sleep after a busy day!

Day 2

After a hearty breakfast, take some time to explore the beautiful grounds around Killashee – not forgetting to take a turn on the exhilarating zip line – then pick up a picnic lunch on the go. Head to Athy for a cruise along the Barrow with Athy Boat Tours. Enjoy your picnic on the shores of this stunning river; alternatively, drop into the Auld Shebeen in Athy for the best of pub food. Then, take in some history at the Shackleton Museum and if you have time, try a paddle boat along the Grand Canal. End the day with a family dinner at the Clanard Court Hotel – don't forget to say hello to the Alpacas!

Day 3

After another great night's sleep at the Killashee, it's time for another action-packed day, this time taking in some history and heritage in Ireland's Ancient East. Spend the morning at Lullymore Heritage & Discovery Park, then take the short drive to Newbridge for lunch in Judge Roy Beans. End your Kildare family adventure at Pollardstown Fen, just a seven-minute drive from Newbridge town. Then it's time for home – tired but very happy.

this is what happy memories are made of....

into
heritage

County Kildare undoubtedly is the centrepiece of Ireland's Ancient East. Every town and village is packed full of heritage sites, from important early Christian monuments to interactive visitor experiences that teach history in a fun and informative way.

There's plenty to learn too – Strongbow, St. Brigid, Ernest Shackleton and Arthur Guinness are just a few of County Kildare's long list of past famous residents who combine to give County Kildare an eclectic mix of history and heritage.



Ardclough Village Centre Malt to Vault Exhibition

Ardclough, Co. Kildare
ardcloughvc.com

Shackleton Museum

Town Hall, Emily Square, Athy, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 59 863 3075
shackletonmuseum.com

Castletownhouse

Castletown, Celbridge, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 1 628 8252
castletown.ie

One of County Kildare's most famous sons is Arthur Guinness – and the From Malt to Vault exhibition at the Arthur's Grave Centre brings his remarkable story to life. The quiet, unhurried canalside community of Ardclough, is where Arthur Guinness was born and returned to be buried – and where the teenage entrepreneur founded his world-famous brand of beer. This is the story of his achievement, the politics and economics of the time, and the obstacles he overcame on the way. The exhibition also shows how Ardclough's hinterland has changed little since the days when Arthur's kinspeople farmed these lands.

Discover the fascinating history of Athy in the Shackleton Museum, which is located in the former 18th century market house. Exciting sound and vision combine to take you through the town's key moments, from its Anglo-Norman foundations, to the 1798 Rebellion, to the 1903 Gordon Bennett motor race, which took place on a circuit around Athy. The centre also houses the only permanent exhibition devoted to the Kildare-born Antarctic explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton.

Castletown is Ireland's first and largest Palladian-style house. Built between 1722 and c.1729 for William Conolly, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, it was intended to reflect Conolly's power and to serve as a venue for entertaining on a grand scale. Today, Castletown is home to a significant collection of paintings, furnishings and objets d'art. Highlights include three eighteenth-century Murano-glass chandeliers and the only fully intact 18th-century print room in the country. Take a stroll around the beautiful parklands or lunch in the on-site café, which is homed in the restored 18th-century Kitchen Wing.





into
heritage

Why not combine your love of history with the great outdoors with a visit to one of the great heritage spots in a picturesque town? For instance, the Kildare Town Heritage Centre or Leixlip Castle can be a stepping stone to exploring the beautiful towns.

Alternatively, the kids will love the many attractions in Lullymore, a clever heritage site that combines education with the outdoors – make sure to empty at least half your day to enjoy these great outdoor heritage spots!

Kildare Heritage Centre

Market Square, Kildare Town, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 45 530672
kildareheritage.com

Leixlip Castle

Main Street, Leixlip, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 1 6246 873
discoverireland.ie/kildare/leixlip-castle

Lullymore Heritage & Discovery Centre

Lullymore East, Lullymore, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 45 870 238
lullymoreheritagepark.com

The Kildare Town Heritage Centre is the ideal place to begin your exploration of the town's ancient treasures, including St Brigid's Cathedral and grounds. Housed in the restored and refurbished 19th century Market House, visitors are greeted by a medieval guide who leads them to a tranquil space where the adventure begins. The highlight undoubtedly is the Legends of Kildare Virtual Reality Experience, which transports you back in time on an emotional and magical journey that covers stories of the Fianna, St Brigid and the arrival of the Normans.

Leixlip Castle was built soon after 1172 by Adam de Hereford, a follower of Strongbow, the Norman invader of Ireland. Since 1958, it has been in the ownership of Desmond Guinness and his family, and it now contains many items of antique furniture, tapestries, paintings and drawings and some unusual items. These include a large 18th century dolls' house, a military bath (which is in current use), and a cabinet inlaid with views of ruined abbeys and round towers, Irish wolfhounds and harps in the decoration. The garden features a conservatory and a temple and a walled vegetable garden.

Make the most of a sunny day at Lullymore Heritage Centre, a wonderful facility set out over 60 acres of serene woodland and peatland trails. Located in the Bog of Allen in West Kildare, the award-winning park takes visitors through early Christian times (and Saint Patrick's links with Lullymore) to Captain John Coorly's (a native of Lullymore) significant role in the 1798 rising. There are many other heritage exhibits too, including the Famine House, Blacksmith's Forge, Hedge School, Fairy Bower and Theme Gardens. And for the kids, there's a play area, 18-hole mini golf and a magical treasure hunt.



into heritage trails

At the heart of Ireland's Ancient East, County Kildare is home to an enviable number of important heritage sites. From ancient pathways and by-ways of Celtic and Christian Ireland, to Norman strongholds, gentrified houses, a Quaker Village and the legacy of famous Artic explorer Ernest Shackleton there is an abundance of stories waiting to be discovered.

Explore the stories of ancient Christianity in County Kildare with a self-guided audio tour, including the High Cross at Moone, a Viking hogback grave at Castledermot Monastery, St Ailbe's monastery in Clane, and of course St. Brigid's Cathedral and Round Tower in Kildare. Or for a guided tour, My Bike Or Hike will guide you along the trails or create a bespoke itinerary for the ultimate trail experience.

Arthur's Way

Leixlip, Celbridge, Ardclough & Oughterard
intokildare.ie/arthurs-way

St Brigid's Heritage Trail

Kildare Town
intokildare.ie/st-brigid-s-trail

Celbridge Heritage Trail

Celbridge
intokildare.ie/celbridge-heritage-trail

Kildare Monastic Trail

South Kildare
intokildare.ie/kildare-monastic-trail

Shackleton Heritage Trail

South Kildare
intokildare.ie/the-shackleton-trail

The Guinness Storehouse may be the home of the famous tipple but delve a little deeper and you will realise that its birthplace lies here in County Kildare. Follow in the footsteps of stout maker on Arthur's Way – a scenic 16km ramble or bike ride through the Kildare countryside.

Discover the legacy of St Brigid, one of our best loved saints, on a trail through the town of Kildare, where she founded her monastery, and surrounding countryside including St. Brigid's Well.

Celbridge is a town steeped in interesting stories from all eras, and historic buildings connected to an array of significant figures from the past. Stroll through history on this fascinating trail with an audio guide or guided tour.

Explore the atmospheric ruins of ancient monasteries through this historical trail that extends the length and breadth of the County. The route takes in some of Ireland's most famous and best-preserved monastic sites - including round towers and high crosses.

Spanning South County Kildare, discover a host of sites linked to the great Artic explorer, including an early Georgian Villa and Gardens, an authentic Quaker Village and an Ernest Shackleton showcase.



Bog of Allen

Beginning at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre at Lullymore Heritage Park, walkers can choose from a number of different trails through the bog, ranging from 2.5km to 5km, approximately 40 to 80 minutes. Make sure you get to Lodge Bog, a wet and wild raised bog that attracts a wide range of wildlife, including insect-eating sundews, frogs, curlews, Large Heath butterflies and dragonflies.



Curragh

Close to the town of Newbridge, the Curragh is world-famous for horse racing – but it's also home to the Curragh Plains, an extensive tract of grassland covering nearly 5,000 acres. The area is steeped in history (Fionn MacCumhaill and the Fianna are said to have raced their horses there) and is a wonderful place for walking, cycling and kite flying. Make sure to wear wellies and keep any dogs on their leads, as sheep roam freely throughout the plains. Top tip: get there early to see the horses from the racecourse during their morning exercise routine.



Donadea Forest Park

Combine a look into Kildare's heritage with some stunning forest walks at Donadea Castle and Estate. The old home of the Aylmer family up until 1935, the site contains lots of historical features including the remains of the castle and walled gardens, St. Peter's church, an ice house and boat house. There is also a café open throughout the year. The forest park has three looped walking trails, ranging from the Lake Walk (0.8km – great for young families) to the Aylmer Walk, a 5.7km Slí na Sláinte trail that takes you all around the park. Donadea also offers three permanent orienteering courses.



Killinthomas Woods

Often touted as one of County Kildare's most precious hidden gems, Killinthomas Woods is an area of outstanding natural beauty and the ideal location for a forest walk. Located close to Rathangan village, there are approximately 10km of signposted walks in the wood, which also takes in a wide variety of ecosystems. The wood has a mixed hardwood-conifer forest with very diverse flora and fauna, and all walks are well signposted from the carpark and throughout the forest.



Mullaghreelan Woods

Mullaghreelan Wood is a 2.3km loop trail is set in a picturesque location surrounding a hilltop, which overlooks the beautiful Kilkea Castle. History lovers will revel in the many stories involving this ancient monument, while those looking for their nature fix will find it in the plentiful wildflowers dotted throughout the woodland estate. Two trails are waymarked - the Rath Walk, through the beech lined avenue and on up to the rath for the breathtaking views and the O'Tuathail Walk, via the wishing well in the north-east of the forest.

Pollardstown Fen

Now a National Nature Reserve, Pollardstown Fen is the largest remaining calcareous spring-fed fen in Ireland. The Fen extends for 220 hectares, much of it State-owned, and is recognised as an internationally important fen ecosystem with unique and endangered plant communities. The area attracts nature lovers from all over the world; walkers can experience the Fen from up close via a boardwalk looped route installed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service, or via one of the other longer walks.





As you'd expect from the Thoroughbred County, horseracing, the sport of kings, is the primary sport in Kildare.

As well as being the centre for horse breeding in Ireland, the county is home to three major racecourses, each of which offer a full season of meetings and events.

Each racecourse – The Curragh, Naas and Punchestown – are well established and offer a wide range of activities alongside the world-renowned racing. A range of eating and drinking options are available at each course, making a day at the races one of the most exciting and glamorous events you will experience all year!

The Curragh

Curragh Racecourse, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 45 441205
curragh.ie

Naas

Naas Racecourse,
Tipper Road, Naas, Co Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 45 897391
naasracecourse.com

Punchestown

Punchestown Racecourse
Punchestown, Naas, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 45 897704
punchestown.com

The Curragh quite simply is the centre of Ireland's horse industry, with a full calendar of races and events, as well as an extensive training ground for thoroughbreds throughout the year. In fact, thundering hooves could be heard on The Curragh as far back as the 3rd century, when chariot racing took place on the grassy plains. Now, the course is home to all five Irish flat-racing Classics, including the oldest, The Irish Derby, which originated in 1866. The course itself is a paradise for race fans, with a bar, food hall, café and convenience store among the in-house facilities.

Naas Racecourse is known as the Nursery of Champions and holds several very important meetings that act as preparation for key festivals, including the Royal Ascot Trials Day – perfect for those preparing for Royal Ascot glory. There are events of all kinds on race days including family fun days, summer barbecue evenings, live music events, ladies' days, community days and more. Facilities and function rooms are available for private hire on race days as well as a Panoramic Restaurant that seats 200 people. A day at the races would give any social occasion a spectacular twist.

Punchestown Racecourse is known as the home of Irish jump racing and holds a number of major meetings each year. One of the highlights is the Punchestown Festival, which is regarded as Ireland's answer to Cheltenham, and is a major racing festival in the Irish National Hunt Season. Punchestown is also the home of Ireland's best known International Three Day Event. Facilities such as private suites and a choice of top restaurants and bars add to the visitor experience during these major events. The racecourse is also frequently used as a concert venue for big international bands and music festivals.



into
golf

The beautiful rolling countryside in County Kildare is the perfect setting for high-quality golf courses, so it's not surprising that we excel in terms of both quantity and quality of golf courses. With over 20 parkland courses to explore, you'll have to return again and again to experience them all.

Some of our golfing highlights include Carton House, a Fairmont Managed Hotel and The K Club, both of which have hosted numerous Irish and European Opens. Just to prove the county's golfing pedigree further, County Kildare is also home to Ireland's oldest golf course and club, Royal Curragh Golf Course, which was established in 1852 and is playable all year round. The K Club will be host to the Irish Open from 2023-2027 and the Irish Challenge Tour from 2022-2026.

Carton House, a Fairmont Managed Hotel

Carton Demesne, Maynooth, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 1 505 2000
cartonhouse.com/golf

The K Club

Straffan, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 1 601 7200
kclub.ie/golf

Kilkea Castle

Castle View, Kilkea Demesne, Castledermot, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 59 914 5600
kilkeacastle.ie

Moyvalley Golf Resort

Balyna Estate, Moyvalley, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 46 954 8080
moyvalley.com/golf

Home to not one but two championship golf courses, Carton House Golf is one of Ireland's most famous and prestigious golf venues. Nestled within 1,100 acres of private parkland, the courses benefit from beautiful views, natural woodlands and a location just 25 minutes from Dublin Airport. Carton House was the venue for the 2005, 2006 and 2013 Irish Opens as well as the 2018 World Amateur Team Championships, and is the home of the Golfing Union of Ireland. Choose to play on the O'Meara Parkland Golf Course or the Montgomerie Links Golf Course.

Undoubtedly one of the top golfing resorts in Europe, the five-star K Club Hotel & Golf Resort is home to two magnificent golf courses that have hosted many championships over the years. The Arnold Palmer-designed Palmer North Course, one of Europe's most spectacular courses has hosted the Ryder Cup in 2006, the 2016 Dubai Duty Free Irish Open and 11 European Opens, while the Palmer South Course, an inland links course features many dramatic landscapes with dune-style mounding throughout the resort.

Set in the grounds of Kilkea Castle, one of the oldest inhabited castles in Ireland, Kilkea Golf Course brings together championship-level golf with stunning scenery and unique heritage. The magnificent castle can be viewed from every fairway. In constructing this championship course, designers Jack McDaid and Jim Cassidy cleverly used the River Griese as a natural hazard flowing through the Castle grounds and estate. The combination of this water and a variety of other hazards presents a significant challenge for every golfer.

Part of the beautiful 500-acre Balyna Estate in north Kildare, Moyvalley Golf Club is home to an inland links-style course designed by Darren Clarke and European Golf Design. The course has hosted the 2009 European Challenge Tour and the Irish PGA Championships in 2016 and 2017. This challenging Par 72 course features rolling fairways, immaculate bunkers, lakes and large state-of-the-art greens. Training facilities include a driving range, a short game academy with two large chipping greens, three large bunkers and one large practise putting green.



We Care in Kildare

Bonding with
the Boys

Day 1

With so many activities in County Kildare, arranging a few days away with the boys is easy and oh so accessible. Begin your trip away and test your aim with clay pigeon shooting and archery at Abbeyfield Farm or airsoft and paintball at Redhills Adventure! Having built up an appetite, there's a choice of restaurants including Cunningham's of Kildare or Cookes of Caragh.

After lunch, take in a visit to one of County Kildare's – and Ireland's – biggest attractions, Mondello Park. Now considered one of Europe's best racing circuits, Mondello Park has seen some of the world's biggest racing drivers take on its tricky bends and corners. Take on the circuit in a luxury car or try your hand at the Formula Race Thrill, the closest you'll get to Formula 1 racing without going pro.

Check into the four-star Westgrove Hotel in Clane, remembering to leave time to explore the expansive leisure facilities, including the 20-metre pool. Then it's on to Sallins for dinner at the acclaimed TwoCooks Restaurant.



Day 2

After a good night's sleep it's time to take to the water, courtesy of a barge trip along the Grand Canal with Bargetrip.ie. Relax and enjoy the sights along the scenic waterway before returning to Sallins for lunch at Lock 13 Brew Pub and see where your beer was brewed in the on-site brewery tour.

Before heading home, if you fancy more action, take in one of the famous golf courses - who knows, you may just discover a new Rory McIlroy in your group of friends!

the best way to recharge your batteries with this fun fueled mini break...

into getting on the water

With so many waterways flowing through the Kildare countryside, it's no surprise that watersports are popular activities in the county. We have literally hundreds of kilometres of beautiful rivers for you to discover, and plenty to see and do.



Kayaking and fishing are immensely popular activities on all our rivers, while our greenways feature stunning views and carefully preserved towpaths. Pop into a neighbouring town for a boat tour or to hire canoes – great fun for every member of the family!

Barrow Blueway

Lowtown to Athy

Grand Canal Greenway

Sallins, Robertstown, Allenwood

River Liffey

Straffan, Leixlip, Newbridge

Royal Canal Greenway

Maynooth, Kilcock, Moyvalley

The Barrow Blueway is one of Ireland's most picturesque walking and cycling routes, stretching 114 kilometres from Lowtown, through Athy and onwards to St. Mullins in County Carlow. Explore the area by canoe as well as by bike or by foot, or enjoy one of the many activities including guided and solo canoe trips, stand-up paddling adventures or leisurely boat or barge cruising. Bike hire is readily available.

The main Grand Canal line extends 132km from Dublin to the Shannon with 40km passing through County Kildare, while several branches extend to Athy, Naas, Corbally and Milltown. This Greenway takes walkers or cyclists through some of Kildare's most scenic small towns and villages following pleasant grassy towpaths and canal-side roads offering breathtaking countryside views as well as plenty of places of interest and opportunities for canoeing, boating and fishing. Bike hire is easily available.

One of the most famous rivers in Ireland, the River Liffey also boasts some of the most beautiful river scenery around Leixlip. Kayaking is very popular on the Liffey, with the Liffey Descent Canoe Race a famous annual event beginning in Straffan. Kayaking experiences are available at the K Club, while a host of canoe clubs and schools dot the countryside around Kildare and Dublin. Alternatively, stroll along the river at Newbridge's Linear Park or on the maintained walkway between Leixlip and Lucan.

The Royal Canal Greenway is 130km of accessible walking and cycle pathways between Maynooth, Co. Kildare, and the Shannon in County Leitrim, with a further length connecting Dublin and Maynooth. The greenway is an excellent way to enjoy the stunning views over the canal, the locks (there are 46 in total along the entire canal and aqueducts), and the diverse wildlife that has made the canal their home. Try a guided trip through one of the many operators or go it alone by hiring a barge. Bike hire is also available at Maynooth.





For adrenalin seekers, you can't get a better location than County Kildare. The thrills and spills are not just confined to equestrian sports – the county is also home to several of Ireland's best adventure centres, including the world-famous Mondello Park race circuit, which will keep everybody in the family happy.

If you have a budding Lewis Hamilton in the family, try the Formula 1 experience at Mondello Park; for kids (and big kids too), there's archery and paintball at Redhills Adventure Centre. Or if you would like to experience County Kildare's equestrian heritage for yourself, challenge yourself with the cross-country obstacle course at Abbeyfield. It's all just waiting for you!

Abbeyfield Farm Country Pursuits

Celbridge Road, Richardstown, Clane,
Co. Kildare

Tel +353 (0) 86 816 4130
abbeyfieldfarm.com

Mondello Park

Donore, Naas, Co. Kildare

Tel +353 (0) 45 860 200
mondellopark.ie

Redhills Adventure Centre

Redhills, Co Kildare

Tel +353 (0) 87 248 1246
redhillsadventure.ie

Add some adventure into your break with a visit to Abbeyfield Farm Country Pursuits, a wonderful venue set in 240 acres of superb Kildare countryside. Their popular Equestrian Centre offers daily ride-outs for riders of all abilities through the beautiful surrounding countryside. Experienced tutors are always on hand to help you make the most out of your visit. And if horses aren't your thing, visit Abbeyfield's extensive and state-of-the-art shooting grounds, where you can try your hand at clay pigeon shooting, archery and target rifle shooting, with expert tuition included for all levels.

Set in 100 acres of greenfield space, Mondello Park is now a major race circuit in Europe, having staged a round of the FIA Sports Car Championship, run a European championship historic racing event, hosted several rounds of the British Touring Car Championship, British GT and Formula 3 series – all since 2000. Its current calendar includes Car, Motorcycle, Rallycross, Drifting and Time Attack events as well as shows for Modified Cars, Classic Cars and Trucks. If you want to take to the track yourself, the venue offers a number of driving experiences (also great as presents) and corporate days out – from supercars to Formula 1- style racing.

Located near Kildare Town, Redhills Adventure Centre offers fun for kids and adults aged seven and over. For younger kids, there's Splatmaster Junior Paintball, Archery Tag and the Target Archery Range, while for older kids (aged 11+), there's Airsoft Combat Games and the Target Airsoft Range – perfect for Fortnite and video game fans. Alternatively, the Team Challenges package puts the whole family to the test, with tests such as Giant Puzzle, Stepping Stone, Run Mat, Drain Pipe Challenge and Giant Xs & Os. Bundle your chosen activity with other attractions such as the Assault Course or Human Foosball.



Teenagers and tiny tots alike have plenty to enjoy in County Kildare. Every corner of the county is packed full of great options for great family days out, from meeting exotic animals and racing go-karts in Clonfert to crazy golf and zip lining at Kildare Maze. Whatever you're into, there's something for every family member to discover in County Kildare!

into
family fun

For indoor fun, check out Air-Tastic Celbridge, KBowl Naas and K-Leisure in Athy, Naas, Newbridge. Please remember that all attractions are subject to seasonal opening times. Consult individual websites for opening days and times and to pre-book tickets (if needed).

Clonfert Pet Farm

Clonfert, Maynooth, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 1 601 6314
clonfertpetfarm.com

Florence & Milly

Station House, The Waterways, Sallins, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 45 913 887
florenceandmilly.com

Irish National Stud & Gardens

Brallistown Little, Tully, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 45 521 617
irishnationalstud.ie

Kildare Farm Foods Open Farm

Rathmuck, Kildare, Co. Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 45 526 774
kildarefarmfoods.com

Kildare Maze Activity Centre

Ballinafagh, Prosperous, Naas, Co Kildare
Tel +353 (0) 89 496 4899
thekildaremaze.com

Established in 2009, Clonfert Pet Farm has grown from a small open farm into an affordable location for a great family day out. The farm is home to over 60 different types of animals, including cows, ponies, pigs, goats, Common Marmosets and Ring Tailed Lemurs. And with a coffee shop, walk-ways, picnic areas, an additional outdoor play area, Go Karts, an indoor soft play area and mini-golf also on-site, you can easily spend the entire day here.

Florence & Milly is a ceramic art studio and coffee bar in Sallins run by mixed media artist Laura Barry, which offers parties and sessions for visitors to paint their chosen ceramics. Or if you don't want to take part, simply order from the coffee bar and watch the artists at work in the studio. Before you go, stop in the gift shop for a ceramic keepsake. PS – make sure to look out for Laura's furry colleague, therapy dog Belle!

One of the jewels in Co. Kildare's equestrian crown is the Irish National Stud & Gardens, which now features the new interactive Irish Racehorse Experience. And there's more to discover in this famous attraction - visit the renowned Japanese Gardens and the peaceful St Fiachra's Garden, or take the kids to the beautiful Fairy Trail and the large playground; even better, make a day of it with a picnic or lunch in the café.

This third-generation family farm, now a zoo, includes animals like wallabies, mara, pigs, goats, ponies, zebra, camels, ostrich, alpaca, buffalo, peacocks, geese, emu, deer and sheep. See the animals in style with a trip on the Adventure Railroad. Plus, rain or shine, keep the family happy with the 18-hole indoor Indian Creek Crazy Golf. Before you leave, visit the Farm Shop, which stocks a wide range of artisan foods.

Leinster's largest hedge maze, extending to 1.5 acres, is the perfect place to get your family out in the fresh air! When you escape and reach the centre, enjoy the panoramic view from the new Viewing Tower. Alternatively, try your skill at the nine-hole crazy golf, the adventure trail or the thrilling zip wire. And if it's raining, the younger kids will stay active in the Wooden Maze, an all-weather maze that is equally challenging for all who dare to enter.



into gardens

Whether you're a keen gardener or simply like to immerse yourself in nature, County Kildare has a number of famous gardens and parklands to explore. Take a stroll through the beautiful gardens or challenge the kids to spot rare flowers and insects – a natural scavenger hunt!

From the exotic surroundings of the Japanese Garden to the idyllic riverside and woodland walks at Castletown, our gardens never fail to soothe the soul. We have something to suit every taste, from natural Irish gardens to exotic flower-filled oases. Discover them all! Inspired by your visit? Call into Johnstown Garden Centre with a large selection of plants to choose from.



Burtown House

Athy, Co. Kildare

Tel +353 (0) 59 862 3865

burtownhouse.ie

Castletown House & Parklands

Castletown, Celbridge, Co. Kildare

Tel +353 (0) 1 628 8252

castletown.ie

Coolcarrigan House & Gardens

Coill Dubh, Naas, Co. Kildare

Tel +353 (0) 45 863 527

coolcarrigan.ie

Japanese Gardens & St. Fiachra's Garden

Irish National Stud & Gardens, Tully, Co. Kildare

Tel +353 (0) 45 521 617

nationalstud.ie

The gardens at Burtown are made up of several areas, including large herbaceous borders, shrubberies, a yew walk divided by a pergola, a sundial garden, an old orchard, a more formal stable yard garden and a large woodland garden surrounded on all sides by water. Isabel Shackleton (who was married to the present owner's great grandfather and first cousin to the explorer Ernest Shackleton) is responsible for the original layout, but now it has been greatly enlarged and reclaimed by the present owners, artist Lesley Fennell and her son James Fennell.

Open throughout the year, the vast grounds surrounding Castletown House are ideal for walkers and explorers alike. The estate's commitment to the environment is demonstrated with An Taisce Green Flag Awards and Best Park Pollinator Awards. The grounds include different paths taking in woodland, the shores of the River Liffey and many architectural features, including the Batty Langley Lodge, the Conolly Folly and the Wonderful Barn. Dogs are welcome but must be kept on a lead due to the amount of natural wildlife that nest in the grounds.

An attractive Georgian house built in the 1830s, Coolcarrigan House is known for its stunning 15-acre garden at the end of a long avenue. A very unusual collection of trees and shrubs, the arboretum contains many rarities, along with a special wildflower meadow – there's something at every time of the year. Coolcarrigan Gardens are open all year around for guided tours of groups of 15+. They are also open to individual visits on designated dates or by appointment. The gardens are especially accessible for those with disabilities.

The Japanese Gardens, at the Irish National Stud, offer a natural experience unlike any other in the county. The gardens were laid out by Japanese master horticulturist Tassa Eida and his son Minoru, to symbolise the journey of life through trees, plants, flowers, lawns, rocks and water. The result is a peaceful environment that seamlessly blends Eastern and Western cultures. The same venue is home to St. Fiachra's Garden, the patron saint of gardeners. This stunning garden celebrates the Irish landscape in its rawest state, using rock, water and natural woodlands.





K

We Care in Kildare Girls' Getaway

1 Night,
2 Day
Itinerary

Day 1

From New York-style shopping experiences to glamorous fashion from the past, County Kildare is the perfect location for a memorable girls' trip away. Begin your break with some retail therapy at one of Ireland's biggest shopping centres, Whitewater Shopping Centre in Newbridge, before visiting the Newbridge Silverware Visitors' Centre for a tour around the famous factory. Don't miss the on-site Museum of Fashion Icons to witness famous celebrity looks from such famous faces as Princess Diana, Audrey Hepburn and Marilyn Monroe.

Enjoy afternoon treats in the Victorian Tea Rooms at Straffan Antiques (make sure to check out the latest stock in the shop too), then head to your base for your break: the world-famous K Club. Check into the hotel and change into your robe for a luxurious spa experience like no other in the acclaimed on-site spa. Once you feel rested and rejuvenated it's time for drinks at the Blue Martini Cocktail Bar, followed by dinner at The Palmer and late-night drinks in the Henry Lounge.

Day 2

Take time for a leisurely breakfast – and make sure you fuel up, because today it's time for some serious shopping! No girls' trip to County Kildare is complete without a trip to Kildare Village, Ireland's only designer outlet. Stock up on your designer goodies, all at a sizeable discount, before ending your trip with a long lunch at Firecastle or the Silken Thomas, just five minutes away.

because pamper breaks with a little retail therapy are simply essential...



into
shopping...



54



Weekly Markets

Craft is also a mainstay in the many markets dotted throughout Kildare. Virtually every town in the county has a weekly market selling everything from fresh produce to flowers, street food, crafts, handmade jewellery, cakes and artisan foodstuffs. Look at local listings for the closest market to you, or check out loveyourlocalmarket.ie.

Crafts & Treasures

If you love hunting down a special find, then County Kildare is place for you. A must-see is Crookstown Craft Village, home to a pottery, gift shop, chocolate outlet and art studios. Check out Straffan Antiques & Design Centre, a treasure trove of antiques, furniture, fashion, fine art, Irish gifts and design. And, Kilcock Art Gallery deals in Irish fine paintings, sculpture and prints.

County Kildare is buzzing with great shopping experiences - from large shopping centres and exclusive boutiques to local markets stuffed full of beautiful crafts and fabulous food fare.

Shopping Heaven

Kildare Village undoubtedly is the shopping highlight for any fashionista – but if you're a fan of high street fashion, don't miss Whitewater Shopping Centre in Newbridge.

Day or night, there's always something going on in County Kildare – festivals, theatre, exhibitions... Discover the latest at intokildare.ie

Theatres & the Arts

Amateur or professional, there's plenty to see in the theatres around County Kildare. Visit the Moat Theatre in Naas, opened in 2003 that stages many different styles of shows throughout the year, including drama, music, comedy, family and sports. Or if you're visiting Newbridge, check out the listings for the Riverbank Arts Centre, Kildare's municipal multi-disciplinary arts centre that provides a wide array of events and activities for both locals and tourists alike. Don't forget to visit the two dedicated visual arts spaces, McKenna Gallery and Children's Gallery.

Festivals Galore

As Ireland's Thoroughbred County, the annual festival calendar in County Kildare is packed full of race days – a real must-see when visiting our beautiful county! But even if you're not into horses, there's plenty of other festivals and special events throughout the year. Enjoy the annual June Fest celebrations and the Kildare Derby Festival each June, while Féile Bríde is a February festival dedicated to Kildare's patron saint. Or visit in March, when every town will have a special celebration for St Patrick's Day. Don't forget the annual Taste of Kildare too, where you can experience the best of cuisine from Kildare's – and Ireland's top chefs and food producers.

Riverbank Arts Centre

Kilcock Art Gallery



into
culture...



From relaxed dining to Michelin starred restaurants, County Kildare is packed full of exciting eateries to suit every taste and palate. And wherever you go in the county, there's lots to discover – an eating experience for every day of the month!

Fine Dining

Explore flavours from around the world, inspired by locally sourced produce in exquisite surroundings. Over the last few years, Kildare's reputation as a 'foodie county' has grown from strength to strength. From Michelin-star and Bib Gourmand dining to sumptuous afternoon tea in castles, enjoy award-winning cuisine made by some of the Countries best chefs.



Cafés

You will never be short of a place to stop for a refreshing tea or coffee and light bite as you explore Kildare. From high-street favourites to independent cafés serving fresh, locally sourced products you can grab and go, or sit awhile and take in the atmosphere.

Gastro Pubs

Kildare is a food lover's dream! You'll find the best meals curated from locally sourced ingredients waiting for you in every town and village. Nothing can beat the warm welcome and delicious food accompanied by a local craft beer. There is a choice of award-winning properties to savour.

Pubs & Nightlife

When it comes to enjoying your favourite beverage, you will find a limitless variety of options. For beer fanatics, you won't be disappointed with a vibrant craft beer scene to sample and for cocktail lovers, many bars and restaurants have specially trained mixologists. Or perhaps you prefer to relax in front of an open fire in a traditional pub with a glass of the black stuff, we are the home of Arthur after all!

Food Producers

Many of Ireland's top food producers are based in County Kildare - from chocolatiers to brewers, food home-grown on site and plenty of freshly-baked goodies – Kildare is a food lovers paradise.

into
great places
to stay



Carton House, a Fairmont Managed Hotel

County Kildare has a fine variety of accommodation to suit every desire and budget. From living like a king in your very own castle to making memories with the family around the fire in a well-appointed campsite, it's all here in County Kildare!

Hotels

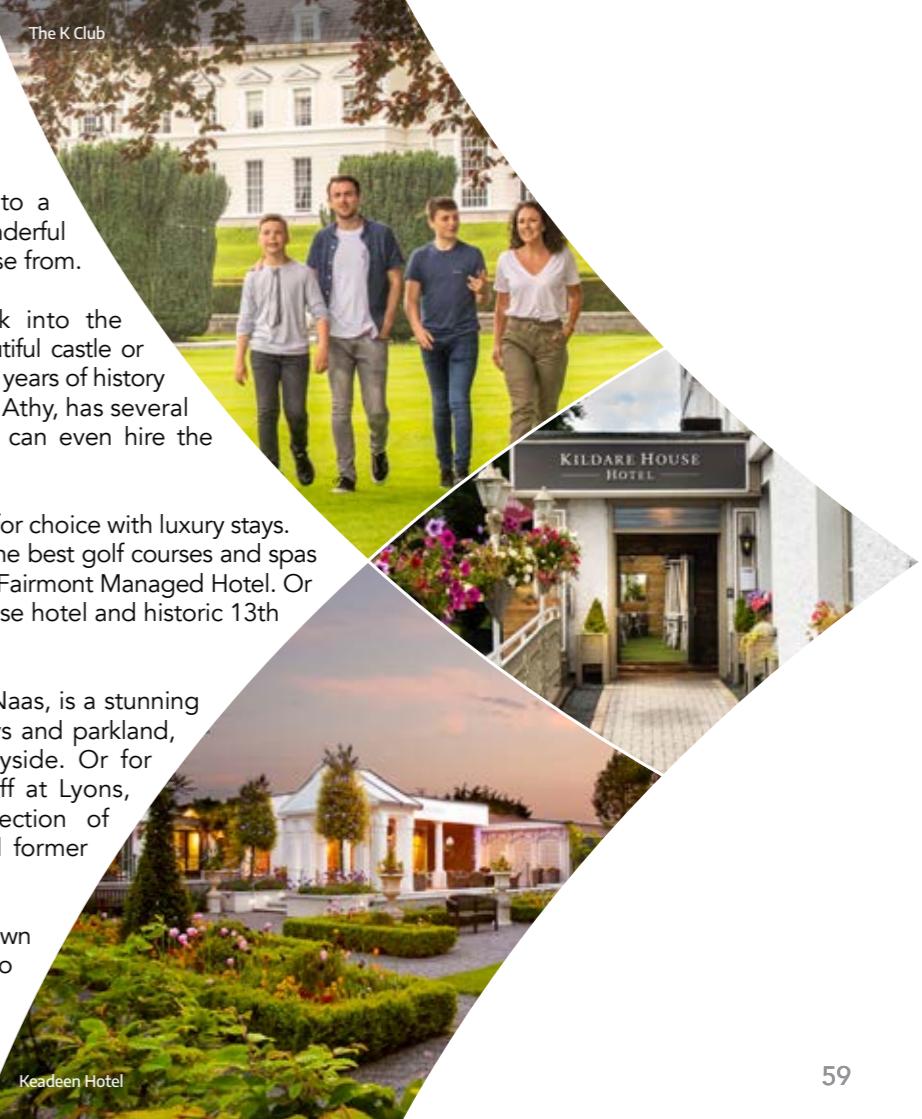
A hotel stay is top of the list when it comes to a pampering break – and from five-star hotels to wonderful venues for weekends away, there's plenty to choose from.

Looking to spoil someone special? Step back into the absolute luxury of yesteryear with a stay in a beautiful castle or country house hotel. Seamlessly blending over 800 years of history with luxurious living for today, Kilkea Castle, near Athy, has several accommodation options to suit everyone – you can even hire the 11-bedroom castle!

If you're in the Maynooth area, you're really spoilt for choice with luxury stays. Enjoy five-star splendour, complete with some of the best golf courses and spas in Ireland, at both the K Club and Carton House, a Fairmont Managed Hotel. Or there's Barberstown Castle, a four-star country house hotel and historic 13th century castle.

Ideal for a romantic break, Killashee Hotel, near Naas, is a stunning option set in acres of beautiful gardens, walkways and parkland, with magnificent views over the Kildare countryside. Or for great food and something a little different, Cliff at Lyons, near Celbridge, consists of an unusual collection of historic rose-clad buildings, including a mill and former dovecot.

Looking for more excitement? Head to Kildare Town for a wide choice of accommodation options close to the town's lively bars, pubs and clubs. While nearby Newbridge is home to Kildare's longest-standing family-run hotel, the Keadeen Hotel.



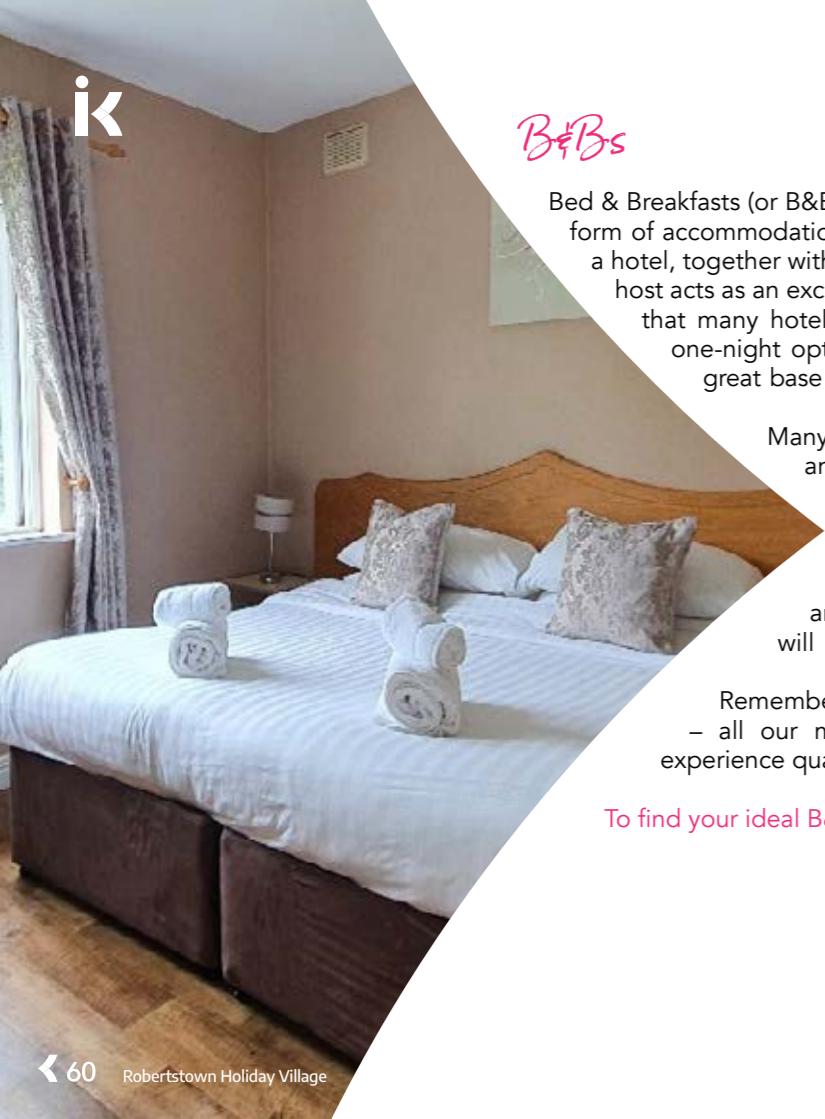
B&Bs

Bed & Breakfasts (or B&Bs as they're generally known) are a quintessential Irish form of accommodation – and nowadays, many have the quality and feel of a hotel, together with an excellent, freshly made breakfast! Often, too, your host acts as an excellent tour guide too, with a wealth of local knowledge that many hotel staff don't have. Don't think of a B&B as merely a one-night option; choosing a well-placed B&B can serve well as a great base from which to explore the wonders of County Kildare.

Many B&Bs are housed on working farms – giving you and the family the ideal opportunity to experience life on a farm (and perhaps even see where the milk for your morning cereal comes from!) Alternatively, a B&B is ideal for a walking tour – simply map out your route through Kildare's beautiful countryside and book into B&B's along the way. Your host will also be able to tell you the best routes to take!

Remember, B&B accommodation is not just in the countryside – all our major towns have options. This is a great way to experience quality accommodation at a much cheaper rate.

To find your ideal B&B, visit intokildare.ie



Self-catering

While hotel stays are great in that there are times when you just want to go it alone, so this is where self-catering comes in. Families in particular like the space and comfort of a house or apartment, as well as the option to cook at home. Don't want to give up all the luxuries of a hotel stay? Opt for a self-catering cottage in the grounds of a hotel – all the luxury of a hotel stay just a short walk from your front door!

Near Maynooth, the luxurious Moyvalley Hotel & Golf Resort is set amidst 550 acres of beautiful countryside – their luxury self-catering cottages are the ideal choice for families or couples who want the space of a house but with top-class hotel facilities on their doorstep. There's also self-catering options in Kilkea Castle and Cliff at Lyons, two hotel destinations known for their luxurious amenities.

If you really want to get away from it all, there are plenty of houses of all sizes available for holidays throughout Kildare. Look at our website for the options currently available – intokildare.ie



Camping

Camping is having something of a moment, but gone are the days of pitching up in a soggy field with a bush as your bathroom. There are plenty of highly regarded campsites throughout County Kildare with excellent facilities, including toilets, showers, electricity points and all. See intokildare.ie for the latest options.



We Care in Kildare

Romantic Overnight

1 Night,
2 Day
Itinerary

Day 1

Begin your holiday with a little history in Kildare town – where you can literally walk in the footsteps of saints and explorers! Visit the town's Heritage Centre for its wonderful VR experience, before setting off on the Heritage Trail, which takes in St Brigid's Cathedral and Round Tower. Head for lunch at Harte's Bar & Grill, right in the centre of the town. After lunch, drive to Maynooth to explore the 13th century Maynooth Castle. Maynooth University is also well worth a visit – a tour of the college buildings is available through the on-site visitor's centre.

Then it's time to check into your chosen hotel. A great choice is Carton House, a Fairmont Managed Hotel a five-star hotel that is ideal for a romantic break thanks to its opulent rooms and wonderful dining options. Take a leisurely stroll through some of the trails around estate, or expand your knowledge with a pleasurable whiskey or wine tasting experience before treating yourself to some fine dining in the Morrison Room or a more laidback meal in the Carriage House.



Market Square, Kildare Town



Shóda Market Café



Carton House, a Fairmont Managed Hotel

Day 2

After a great night's sleep in your luxurious room, enjoy a round of golf on one of the championship courses – a golfer's dream! If golf isn't your thing, book into the luxurious spa at Carton House, a Fairmont Managed Hotel for a treatment and some chill-out time by the pool. Absolute bliss!

Fuel up with lunch at Shóda Market Café, at the Glenroyal Hotel before embarking on the beautiful Royal Canal Greenway. The Greenway can be enjoyed by foot or by bike to Kilcock and beyond (hire your bike at Maynooth Harbour).

a real treat to relax, unwind and enjoy a special romantic date with your other half...



Harte's Bar & Grill

Athy

County Kildare may be one of Ireland's smaller counties but it's packed full of things to explore and discover – in fact, there's so much to see and do that it can be hard to squeeze it all into one holiday! Get the most out of your visit by scheduling sites close to each other on the same day. We've made it easy for you with this guide to County Kildare's eight major districts – try a two-day itinerary in each and see how much you can cram into each exciting day!

Athy is one of two heritage towns in Kildare and developed into a market town thanks to the canal and river network – it is here the River Barrow meets the Athy branch of the Grand Canal. Athy is known internationally for hosting the Shackleton Autumn School in tribute to the great explorer, Ernest Shackleton, who was born at nearby Kilkea and in fact, Athy is home to the only permanent exhibition dedicated to the explorer.

Discover the history of the Quakers in Kildare with a visit to Ballitore and Burtown House & Gardens, or take a cruise along the River Barrow to see the town from a different angle. Explore ancient heritage sites sprinkled throughout the area such as the high Cross at Moone, Kilkea Castle and Whites Castle, which hail from the times of the Normans and Fitzgeralds (the Earls of Kildare), while the 12th century Moate of Ardscoil is infamous for legends of the "little people".



River Barrow & Grand Canal, Athy



White's Castle, Athy



Emily Square, Athy

Celbridge

Celbridge, on the banks of the River Liffey and only 30 minutes west of Dublin, is an area rich in heritage, including many ancient Christian sites and a wonderful legacy of great houses with remarkable stories.

Follow in the footsteps of Arthur Guinness perhaps Ireland's best-known name, on Arthur's Way, or relax with a pint in one of the hosteries along the main street that mark his birthplace. Stroll through history on the Celbridge Heritage Trail – from early Christian Tea Lane, the resting place of the Grattans; to Speaker Connolly's Castletown House – Ireland's finest Georgian residence; then onwards to historic Celbridge Village taking the tranquil riverside trail or the stately tree-lined avenue for a visit to the grounds Celbridge Abbey with links to Jonathan Swift. For the more adventurous, why not enjoy a canoe ride down the River Liffey, paddle board at the Cliff of Lyons or cycle along the Grand Canal towards Sallins.



Arthur's Way



Castletown House, Celbridge

Clane

Located halfway between Maynooth and Naas, with the River Liffey and Grand Canal flowing nearby, the village of Clane is steeped in legend and history. The village boasts connections to the world-famous St Patrick and renowned author, James Joyce.

Nearby you'll find the tranquil villages of Robertstown and Lowtown along the Grand Canal. Previously hives of bustling waterside activity, today you can enjoy a leisure canal cruise, fishing or indeed take in the countryside by bike or foot.



Clane Abbey



Grand Canal, Robertstown

Kildare

The town of Kildare which dates back to the 5th century is rich in heritage and history and the original 19th century Market House offers a glimpse into the past through an immersive virtual reality experience, a great starting point for your visit. St Brigid's Cathedral and Round Tower are nearby – the tower stands almost 33 metres high and is the highest climbable round tower in Ireland, you'll be sure to get a great view of the town and Curragh Plains. St Brigid's Well is a short walk away and a visit to Solas Bhride Hermitages will tell her story in detail.

The first international motor race to be held in Britain or Ireland, the Gordon Bennett Cup, passed through Kildare. In more modern times the town is a destination for shopaholics visiting Kildare Village. For a great day out, the world famous Irish National Stud and Gardens is a must.



Firecastle, Kildare Town



Round Tower, Kildare Town

Leixlip

Leixlip is situated at the union of two rivers, the Rye and the Liffey. These formed ancient borders in Ireland's Celtic past and the town traces its name to the Vikings who settled here in the 9th century. Leixlip Castle, a Norman stronghold, remains centre to the town today and has been in the ownership of the Guinness family since 1958.

An earlier Guinness, Arthur, started his first brewery in Leixlip Leixlip, on the site now housed by the Court Yard Hotel, using the waterways to distribute the black stuff to the masses. This is the ideal starting point for Arthur's Way, a 16km trail following the life of Arthur from birth to death.



River Liffey Linear Walk



Leixlip Castle

Maynooth

Maynooth is Ireland's only university town and a centre of education and research. It is bookended by Maynooth Castle at one end of the town, and 17th century Carton House at the other - both former seats of the Dukes of Leinster.

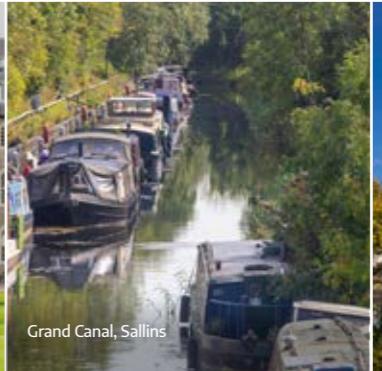
Maynooth was an important stopping point on the Royal Canal for barges before the railway was constructed in 1847. The Royal Canal Greenway, 130km of walking and cycle paths, can be accessed from Maynooth and is the perfect way to get to Kilcock, a canal-side town and then onwards to the unspoilt townland of Moyvalley.



Maynooth Castle



Maynooth University



Grand Canal, Sallins



Naas Harbour

Naas

Naas, once a walled market town, is the county town of Kildare. The area is rich in equine culture with two racecourses – Punchestown, the home of Irish jump racing and Naas, which stages both flat and hunt racing; Goffs Bloodstock Sales and numerous stud farms.

Enjoy a leisurely cruise along the Grand Canal with tours departing from Sallins, savour the tastes of the many restaurants and gastro-pubs dotted throughout the area, including Lemongrass Fusion, 33 South Main or the Dew Drop Inn in nearby Kill. For motor fanatics, experience all that Mondello has to offer.

Newbridge

Newbridge is located on the edge of the Curragh Plains and bounded by the Bog of Allen and Pollardstown Fen. The area is well known for breeding world class bloodstock, horse training and racing so it's no surprise that dotted around nearby are numerous stud farms as well as the Curragh Racecourse. The town expanded rapidly after the Curragh Camp was built in the 19th century.

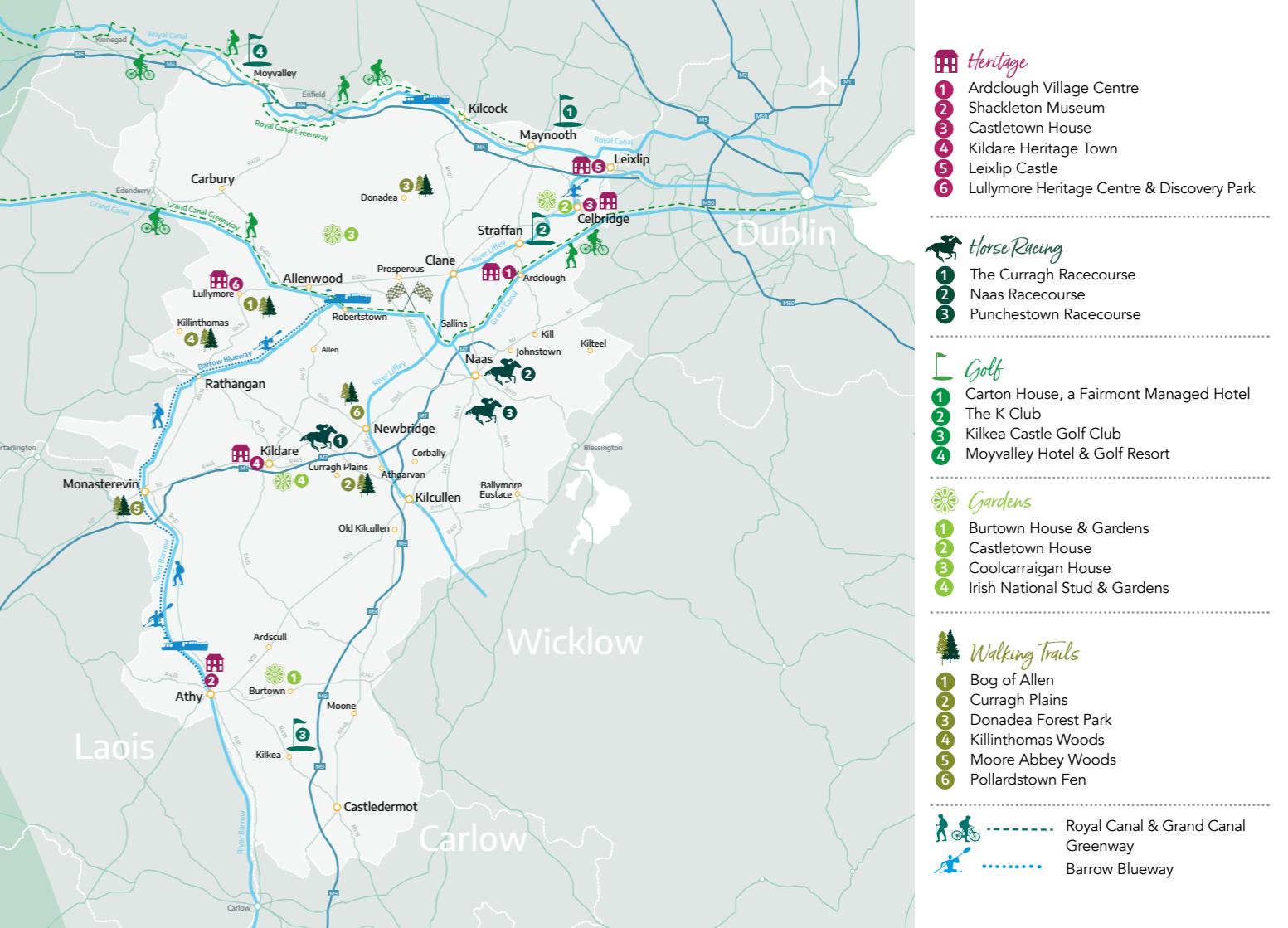
The town, on the banks of the River Liffey, is probably best known for being the home of Newbridge Silverware who have been manufacturing cutlery here since 1934 and more recently as having the largest regional shopping centre in Ireland – Whitewater.

The quiet villages of Athgarvan, Kilcullen and Allen are nearby as well as the oldest golf course, the Royal Curragh. And if you listen carefully, the Curragh Plains and the nearby Hill of Allen tell legendary tales of St Brigid, na Fianna and Dan Donnelly.



For more suggested itineraries and a full listing of accommodation, dining and things to do, visit intokildare.ie.

You'll find lots of inspiration in our guide – whatever you're into.



Heritage

- 1 Ardclough Village Centre
- 2 Shackleton Museum
- 3 Castletown House
- 4 Kildare Heritage Town
- 5 Leixlip Castle
- 6 Lullymore Heritage Centre & Discovery Park

Horse Racing

- 1 The Curragh Racecourse
- 2 Naas Racecourse
- 3 Punchestown Racecourse

Golf

- 1 Carton House, a Fairmont Managed Hotel
- 2 The K Club
- 3 Kilkea Castle Golf Club
- 4 Moyvalley Hotel & Golf Resort

Gardens

- 1 Burtown House & Gardens
- 2 Castletown House
- 3 Coolcarraigan House
- 4 Irish National Stud & Gardens

Walking Trails

- 1 Bog of Allen
- 2 Curragh Plains
- 3 Donadea Forest Park
- 4 Killinthomas Woods
- 5 Moore Abbey Woods
- 6 Pollardstown Fen

- Royal Canal & Grand Canal Greenway
- Barrow Blueway



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