

# IRELAND'S HIDDEN GEM







FREE AS  
A BIRD

SEE FOR  
YOURSELF

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# IRELAND'S HIDDEN GEM

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**The great thing about a visit to Offaly is that you're always going to be surprised.**

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Around every bend and down every country road, you'll come upon an unexpected view or a tucked-away gem of a place. It's not that we're trying to hide them, it's just that we don't want to seem like we're showing off!







## OUR HIDDEN GEMS ARE...

Prepare to be enthralled by our ancient and remarkably well preserved past. Take Clonmacnoise, our world class monastic gem, for example.

Or visit **St. Manchan's Early Christian Site** at Lemanaghan and nearby **Boher's Roman Catholic Church** which has a most extraordinary shrine associated with Lemanaghan on permanent public display.

How about a visit to Tullamore, home of Tullamore D.E.W. and travel back in time through the towns 'Historical Walking Tour'.

And when in Birr... try and catch a show in the historical **Birr Theatre** – a performance space that's earned its place on the national theatre circuit.

While you're in the town, check out the epic **Treehouse Adventure Area**, situated in the picturesque surrounds of **Birr Castle Demesne**. The playground features Ireland's largest treehouse and once you're in, be prepared for a day of discovery at your own pace in **Birr Castle Demesne**.

Last but by no means least, there's Offaly's great outdoors – hidden in plain sight as they say, and delightfully crowd-free.

From the **Slieve Bloom Mountains** to **Lough Boora Discovery Park** and from the sparkling waters of the **River Shannon** to the peaceful stillness of the **Grand Canal** – we've got so much to show you!





UNIQUE

CULTURAL



HISTORICAL



# SWITCHING GEARS



Whether you're hiking or mountain biking the majestic Slieve Bloom Mountains, the last thing you want to do is switch off. Switching gears is far more enjoyable! It's how we do it in Offaly.

And if water-sports make your pulse race, why not kayak, canoe or SUP Board the waterways of Offaly on the mighty River Shannon or the Grand Canal, which can also be cycled. At Lough Boora Discovery Park, you can let our wonderful wildlife and spectacular outdoor sculptures do the gear-switching on your behalf.

Or maybe you'd enjoy a cruise down the Shannon from Banagher where you'll experience the wonder of the midlands from a completely different perspective; as captain of your own boat!

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**Some destinations promise that you'll "switch-off" as soon as you step foot in the place. In Offaly, we prefer the idea of "switching gears" instead.**

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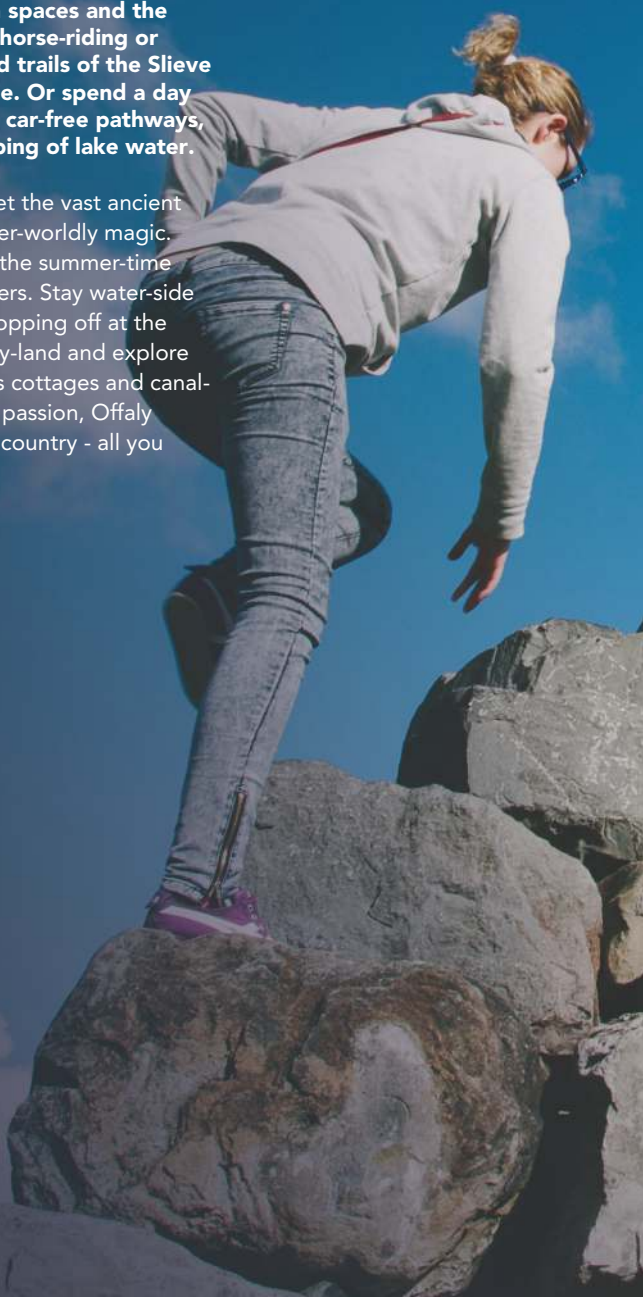
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**Unlike many of the super-busy tourist destinations around Ireland, the magic of Offaly lies in our unspoilt, less-travelled highways and byways.**


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Prepare to re-discover the pleasure of wide-open spaces and the only soundtrack composed by nature. Go hiking, horse-riding or mountain biking along the many paths and looped trails of the Slieve Blooms - Ireland's least congested mountain range. Or spend a day at Lough Boora Discovery Park, cycling along the car-free pathways, where the only sounds are bird-song and the lapping of lake water.

An antidote to the spirit-crushing noise of city-life, let the vast ancient landscape of Clara Bog Nature Reserve work its other-worldly magic. Listen and watch for curlews, snipes and skylarks or the summer-time buzz of flitting dragonflies and energetic grasshoppers. Stay water-side if you prefer, and cruise down the River Shannon, stopping off at the picturesque villages along its banks. Or hop onto dry-land and explore the grassy towpaths, carefully restored lock-keeper's cottages and canal-side roads of the Grand Canal Way. If fishing is your passion, Offaly offers some of the best inland angling waters in the country - all you have to do is land the big one!





A person with red hair, wearing a maroon hoodie and blue jeans, stands on a rocky peak. The background is a clear blue sky. The text 'OFF THE BEATEN TRACK' is overlaid in large, white, hand-drawn letters. The person is positioned behind the word 'OFF' and in front of 'THE'.

OFF THE  
BEATEN  
TRACK





WHERE TIME  
STANDS  
STILL...



# 01 CLONMACNOISE

This sixth century monastic site, located on the banks of the River Shannon is home to three high crosses, a cathedral, seven churches and two round towers.

This great monastery was founded in 548-9 by St. Ciarán Mac a tSaor (“son of the carpenter”), who studied under St. Finian at the famous Clonard Abbey. The strategic location of the monastery at a crossroads between the major east-west land route through the bogs of central Ireland and the River Shannon helped it become a major centre of religion, learning, craftsmanship and trade by the 9th century.


Clonmacnoise was a centre of learning excellence, and many manuscripts, including the Annals of Tighernach (11th century) and the Book of the Dun Cow (12th century), were written here. The monastery flourished for 600 years as a centre of learning and religious instruction as well as providing much of Ireland’s finest Celtic art and illuminated manuscripts. The surrounding area of Clonmacnoise is a microcosm of landscapes within the Midlands. These include the Shannon callows, eskers, boglands both preserved and cutaway.

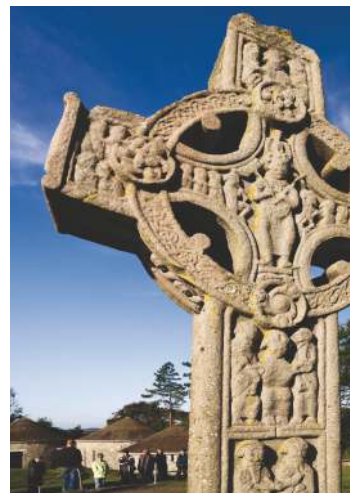
## The Three Stars of Clonmacnoise

Alongside the ruined churches and round towers are three ancient high crosses; two are complete high crosses plus the shaft of another. Now protected from the vagaries of Irish weather in the site’s excellent visitor centre, convincing replicas stand in their original locations. The most famous is the four-meter Cross of the Scriptures, whose sandstone is skillfully carved with intricate figures on all four sides. The Cross of the Scriptures was mentioned twice in the annals of the Four Masters, first in 957 and later in 1060.

At the centre of the head on East face is the Last Judgement, and at the top of the East shaft is a panel showing Christ with Peter and Paul. Below this panel are two more panels bearing iconography that is still open to interpretation. On the base are three riders facing left and two chariots facing right. At the bottom of the shaft is an inscription that has now become almost impossible to see: Or do Colman Dorro...Crossa ar Rig Flnd, A prayer for Colman who had the cross erected on King Flann.



 [heritageireland.ie](http://heritageireland.ie)  
 +353 (90) 967 4195  
 [clonmacnoise@opw.ie](mailto:clonmacnoise@opw.ie)  

## 02 BIRR CASTLE DEMESNE GARDENS & SCIENCE CENTRE

Allow yourself plenty of time to explore Birr Castle Demesne's spectacular Gardens and fascinating Science Centre. The Parsons family invite you to explore one of the most extraordinary places in Ireland. Created over generations, it is an environmental and scientific time capsule.

 [birrcastle.com](http://birrcastle.com)  
 +353 (0)57 912 0336  
 [reception@birrcastle.com](mailto:reception@birrcastle.com)  
  

### The Gardens

Regardless of the time of year you visit, the award winning gardens won't disappoint with their rare and exotic plants. The gardens are home to an abundance of rare plants, collected by the Earls of Rosse on their travels around the world over the last 150 years. Within the 50 hectares you will find the world's tallest box hedges, over 40 champion trees, over 2000 species of plant as well as rivers, lake and waterfalls.

### Science Centre

Travel back to the time when Birr Castle was a hub of scientific discovery and innovation, the third Earl was building the great telescope and his wife Mary was practising her photography. Later, their son Charles Parsons was inventing the steam turbine, which changed the face of seafaring and led to the invention of the jet engine. The interactive centre reveals the wonders of early photography, engineering and astronomy with a special emphasis on the brilliant design and assembly of the world famous Great Telescope.

### The Great Telescope

Wander over to the Great Telescope, designed and built by the third Earl of Rosse in the early 1840s, it was the largest telescope in the world. With this telescope, he discovered the spiral nature of some of the galaxies, and from 1845-1914, anyone wishing to witness this phenomenon had to come to Birr. This 'leviathan' as it is named, remains in the centre of the Demesne as Ireland's greatest scientific wonder and represents a masterpiece of human creative genius – you can't miss it!

### Play in the Tree House!

All you budding knights and princesses will find yourself lost in a world of imagination in the epic Treehouse Adventure Area. The playground features Ireland's largest treehouse along with new complimentary play equipment added in 2019. And while they're busy in the Treehouse Adventure area, you deserve a coffee and a browse around the gift shop and everyone's happy!



# WHERE SCIENCE & NATURE COLLIDE



## 03 LOUGH BOORA DISCOVERY PARK

Transformed from its previous incarnation as a commercial bog where peat was harvested to heat homes around the country, today Lough Boora Discover Park is home to countless species of birds and wildlife, fish-filled lakes and permanent exhibition of huge outdoor sculptures.

**These sculptures give the park an other-worldly feel, created using the old industrial materials of the bog such as locomotives, rail-line and timber, all crafted into magnificent works of art.**

The park is in a continuous state of flux depending on the season. Birds depart or arrive, breed and rear their young. Plants flower and fungi appear and disappear, while the resident animals go about their lives.

Leave all traces of urban-living behind as you hop on your bike and cycle around the wide open spaces of Lough Boora bog and sculpture park. Watch out for fast-moving hares that skip across the paths as you cycle by and don't forget to stop-off at one of the many bird-hides for a glimpse of some feathered-friends up close and personal.

There's also 4 lakes in this 2,000 hectare site of cutaway bog, now a nature-lovers' paradise. We promise you'll feel free as a bird in Offaly's own big sky wilderness.

The raised bogs of the Midlands of Ireland evolved after the last Ice Age, around 15,000 years ago. Mesolithic people wandered through Ireland and one of the most important Mesolithic sites in Ireland is at Lough Boora. Two sites were excavated in 1977. You can visit the site of the ancient settlement by following the Mesolithic Route.

### Visitor Experience

Experience all that Lough Boora Discover Park has to offer outdoor enthusiasts, keen botanists, nature lovers, and arts and culture fans including:

- 3 off-road Cycle Routes ranging in distance from 6km to 15.8km
- 5 off-road Walking Routes ranging in distance from 3.3km to 15,8km
- A dramatic Outdoor Sculpture Park displaying 24 large scale sculptures
- 4 Angling lakes suitable for all abilities.

[www.loughboora.com](http://www.loughboora.com)

+353 (0)57 9340010

[info@loughboora.com](mailto:info@loughboora.com)







### Cycling

Kick-off your Lough Boora adventure at the Visitor Centre and rent bikes for the whole family. Bicycles for all ages are available to hire in Lough Boora and offer another way for you to enjoy the Mesolithic, Farmland and Turraun Cycle Routes. Use a solo or tandem bike to explore 22km of trails, winding through the park's lakes, wetlands and species grasslands. Start from the new Visitor Centre and cycle around the Grey Partridge Conservation Area, stopping for a rest at one of the park's bird hides or a picnic at the Pavilion.

### Walking

Lough Boora Discovery Park offers trails ranging from a short stroll to longer treks to take you through a diverse range of amenities. All routes start and end at the Visitor Centre, with a level walking landscape that can be enjoyed by all age groups. There are 50km of paths in the Parklands ranging in length from a short stroll to the 15.8km Turraun Route. The varying sights, sounds and smells ensure a walk through Lough Boora always has something new, exciting and interesting to offer.

### Sculpture Park

Where art meets nature. Lough Boora Discovery Park is home to some of the most innovative land and environmental sculptures in Ireland. The artists, inspired by the rich natural and industrial legacy of the bog lands, have created a series of large-scale sculptures that are now part of the park's permanent collection. As a paradise for outdoor enthusiasts interested in its unique flora and wildlife, the Sculpture Park's route is enhanced by 24 innovative works of art that dramatically change the landscape with varying contrast depending on the weather, throughout the seasons and over time. Industrial materials of the bog, such as locomotives, rail line, timber and stone have been developed into magnificent sculptures.

### Angling

As areas of Lough Boora came out of commercial peat production, a number of still water fishing lakes were developed as both local and tourist amenities. Most of the lakes do not have a closed season but best results can be achieved between the months of April and October.

## 04 SLIEVE BLOOM MOUNTAINS

The wonderful thing about the Slieve Bloom Mountains (besides being the most unspoilt and uncongested in the country) is that you'll find trails to suit every ability; from the experienced hiker to the casual stroller.

Whether you take on the long-distance Slieve Bloom Way or opt for one of the shorter looped trails, you'll be rewarded by spectacular views stretching across the midlands of Ireland and on a clear cloud free day you can see the four highest points of each of Ireland's four provinces.

All nature lovers will appreciate a visit to the Slieve Blooms as they are rich in flora and fauna. As many as sixty five different bird species have been sighted here and the many glens are alive with the sigh of trees, the rush of water, the sound of birdsong and the bark of deer. When you've finished your day exploring the mountains, drop into one of the cosy pubs in Kinnitty, Cadamstown or Clonaslee and tell us all about it!

### Looped Walks Trail Heads

A selection of twenty one marked walks ranging in length from one hour to four hours and varying degrees of difficulty. Choose your access point from one of five key trailheads which provide map-boards and car-parking.

#### Slieve Bloom Walks

- 1 Glenbarrow Carpark
- 2 Brittas Wood - entrance at Clonaslee village
- 3 Cadamstown village carpark
- 4 Kinnitty Forest - Entrance near Kinnitty village
- 5 Monicknew Forest carpark

 [slievebloom.ie](http://slievebloom.ie)  
 +353 86 8210056  
 [enquiries@slievebloom.ie](mailto:enquiries@slievebloom.ie)  
 



### The Slieve Bloom Way

If you fancy getting off the beaten track for 3 days on a mountain trekking adventure, then pack your rucksack and take on the Slieve Bloom Way. Covering a distance of 60 km, your daily hikes will consist of 4 to 5 hour walks across a mixture of terrain; from gorse-covered flatlands to relatively gentle inclines. The Slieve Bloom Way is a circular walking trail which stretches across the Slieve Bloom Mountains Environment Park - an area of undiscovered environmental beauty, boasting a fabulous array of flora and fauna, remarkable deep glens, rock outcrops and waterfalls, truly 'a walk on the wild side' along forest paths to the heart of Ireland's midlands.

### Slieve Bloom Eco Walk

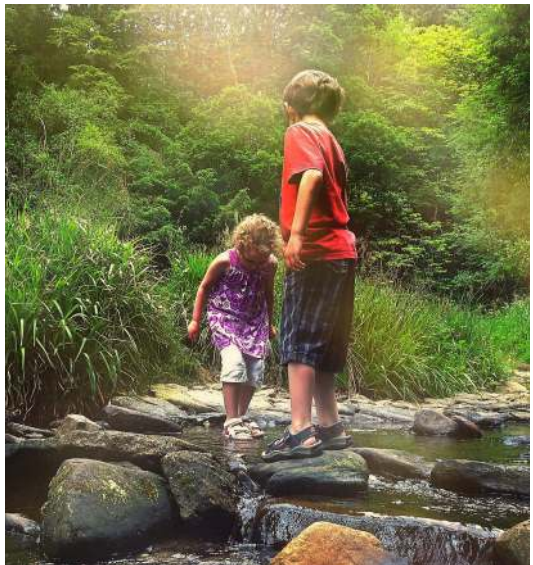
Nature's beauty and diversity is part of the attraction of most walks in rural Ireland, but the special EcoWalks in the Slieve Bloom Mountains draw the walker's attention to flora, fauna and geology in a much more concentrated way; indeed, they will give you new eyes for familiar places, and enrich the walking experience wherever you go! There are five walks of varying length and degree of difficulty to choose from.

### Slieve Bloom Mountain Bike Trails

Slieve Bloom Mountain Bike Trails is a network of purpose-built singletrack trails and forest roads that are designed for use by mountain bikes on waymarked circular routes. The routes are graded blue (moderate) and red (difficult/severe). This is the first phase of an extensive trail system being built in the Slieve Blooms. When complete, there will be more than 80kms of trails ranging from blue to black grade trails, complete with full trailhead facilities at Baunreagh and in Kinnitty village.

This first phase takes the riders through beautiful forest and open land with fantastic views over Kinnitty castle and village and beyond. Forest road climbs lead you into tight twisty singletrack with loads of fast descents, ups and downs, tight turns and technical rocky bits, guaranteed to leave you smiling! The trails are waymarked in one direction, please follow the arrows.

# THE HILLS ARE ALIVE!



[slievebloom.ie](http://slievebloom.ie)  
 +353 (0)86 278 9147  
[bikeit@slievebloom.ie](mailto:bikeit@slievebloom.ie)



## 05 RIVER SHANNON

If you like the idea of setting your own course and choosing when and where to stop off and explore, then a cruising trip along the Shannon could be just the ticket.

**Start your riverside adventure in Banagher and cruise on one of the finest natural inland waterways in Europe as the unspoilt River Shannon meanders through beautiful countryside, past historic towns offering the best in Irish hospitality.**

Decide whether to head north or south. If you choose a northerly direction, you'll take in; Shannonbridge (great for angling by day, music and banter by night) and Clonmacnoise monastic site, one of the most popular attractions in Ireland, let alone on the Shannon, and explore the ruined churches, the cathedral and the round towers, then on to Athlone, the largest town on the river. Or opt instead to steer southwards and you'll encounter Portumna (check out the Forest Park and Portumna Castle), Terryglass (enjoy some great pub grub), eventually arriving at Killaloe, a picturesque town once home to Brian Boru, the High King of Ireland.

Either direction, you'll take in the picturesque towns and villages along the Shannon, maybe pausing along the way for a spot of fishing or bird-watching from a unique water-side perspective. From youngsters to teens; they're sure to enjoy the novelty of boat-living and seeing the world from a completely different water-side perspective! And all from the comfort of your own fully kitted-out cruising boat.

 [silverlinecruisers.com](http://silverlinecruisers.com)  
 +353 (0)57 9151112  
 [info@silverlinecruisers.com](mailto:info@silverlinecruisers.com)  
 

 [cruise-ireland.com](http://cruise-ireland.com)  
 +353 (0)1 278 1666  
 [sales@carrickcraft.com](mailto:sales@carrickcraft.com)  






### Silver Line Cruisers

Its base at the marina in Banagher gives Silver Line Cruisers a central location between the two great lakes of the Shannon, Lough Ree and Lough Derg and only one mile from the Grand Canal. With a choice of 2-berth to 12-berth cruisers plus on-board tuition and navigation instruction provided on arrival, it won't take long before you can set off on your nautical journey!

[www.silverlinecruisers.com](http://www.silverlinecruisers.com)

### Carrickcraft

Step aboard your very own cruising boat and explore the mighty River Shannon at your own pace. Carrickcraft have an extensive fleet of cruisers from 2-berth to 12-berth, all with fully kitted-out galleys (that's a boat-kitchen); perfect for cooking up the fish you caught that day!

And with marina bases in Banagher, Bellanaleck and Carrick on Shannon, you decide where to start your great river adventure.

[www.cruise-ireland.com](http://www.cruise-ireland.com)

### The River Queen (One hour cruise)

Come aboard the 50 seater passenger boat the River Queen at Shannonbridge for a one hour scenic cruise along the Shannon to visit the famous Clonmacnoise monastic site. The boat is enclosed with all round visibility and live commentary is provided by our friendly captain. Contact Silver Line Cruisers directly for sailing times.

[www.silverlinecruisers.com](http://www.silverlinecruisers.com)

STEER YOUR  
OWN COURSE





## 06 TULLAMORE D.E.W.

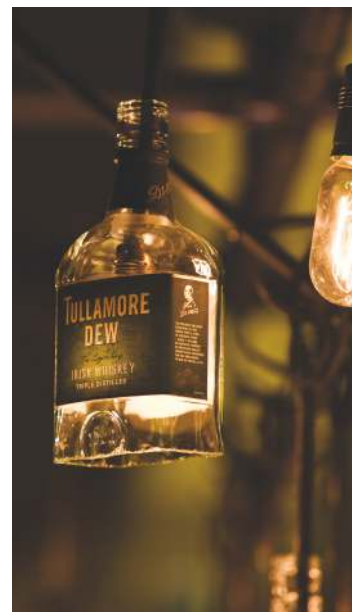
Tullamore D.E.W. has its roots firmly in Offaly. The original Tullamore distillery opened its doors in 1829 in the heart of Tullamore town.

The old bonded warehouse sits majestically on the banks of the Grand Canal and was the last place the whiskey would rest; the final leg on its journey before being shipped up the canal for distribution around the world.

After 60 years of waiting, in September 2014 Tullamore D.E.W. resumed production in its ancestral home of Tullamore, Co Offaly. The new state-of-art distillery will ensure the legacy of our legendary whiskey will live on in the heart of Ireland for the foreseeable future.

From Summer 2021, visitors will be able to enjoy a new immersive Tullamore D.E.W. Visitor Experience at the new distillery, hosting brand and whiskey tours.

For more information see; [www.tullamoredew.com](http://www.tullamoredew.com)





## 07 GRAND CANAL

The Grand Canal Greenway is an historic trail which traverses Leinster from Dublin City to the River Shannon at Shannonharbour in west Offaly. It is 132km in length with 71km lying within Offaly.

The route is punctuated by canal locks, lock houses and industrial architecture from bygone days. There are many heritage sights to be enjoyed along the route including Srah Castle, Bolands Lock House, Tullamore D.E.W. Bonded Warehouse.

Visitors can explore and enjoy the canal by bike, boat, walking or fishing, in the midst of rural tranquility.

The flat terrain makes a great cycling destination. It is possible to cycle from the Grand Canal Greenway to Lough Boora Discovery Park, also off road.





## 08 CLARA BOG VISITOR CENTRE AND NATURE RESERVE

Begin your exploration of one of the best remaining examples of a relatively intact raised bog in Western Europe by dropping into the Visitor Centre in Clara town.

With its colourful wildlife displays, documentaries, cartoons and touch-screen info-graphics, you'll get a deeper appreciation of this vast ancient landscape, its unique biodiversity and its present-day conservation ethos.

The boardwalk, which meanders through Clara Bog Nature Reserve, is located a 2 minute drive from Clara Bog Visitor Centre. As you stroll along the 1km boardwalk across the bog, you may see some of the many birds who've made their home here, including the curlew, snipe, skylark and merlin. If you're lucky, you might glimpse a lizard, while in the summer keep an eye out for dragonflies, grasshoppers and butterflies!

Opening hours in the visitor centre are seasonal so please ensure to contact the centre before making your visit.

Clara Bog is one of the best remaining examples of a relatively intact raised bog in Western Europe. It has been said that you can experience ten thousand years of history in the ten square kilometers that accommodate Clara Bog and its surroundings.

[clarabognaturereserve.ie](http://clarabognaturereserve.ie)  
 +353 57 9368878  
[claraguides@ahg.gov.ie](mailto:claraguides@ahg.gov.ie)  
[f](#) [t](#)





## 09 MONEYGALL AND PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

The people of Moneygall will never forget the day the 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama and the First Lady Michelle Obama visited their village, his Irish ancestral home.

Maybe you fancy a visit to Ollie Hayes' Bar in the Main Street like President Obama did, or view the President's ancestral home where the Kearney Family left from in 1850 and view the old school house where the shoemaker's family were educated.

You can also call into the nearby Barack Obama Plaza Visitor Centre to see an exciting exhibition that tells the story of how an Irish emigrant, Falmouth Kearney departed a small village in Co Offaly in 1851 in search of a better life and became the 3rd Great Grandfather to US President Barack Obama.

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President Obama's late mother Ann Dunham was a descendant of the Kearney family who left Moneygall after the Famine to build a new life in New York in 1850.

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HOME OF  
BARACK  
OBAMA



# DISCOVER OFFALY'S TOWNS

# 01 TULLAMORE

## THE FRIENDLIEST TOWN IN IRELAND

**Tullamore is the capital town of the county of Offaly, and arguably the most central town in Ireland, located half way between Dublin and Galway.**

Tullamore is a thriving and bustling town and a gateway to the midlands. Prosperity came in the form of the Grand Canal, a link from the port of Dublin in 1798. The easy access for goods and people led to the town's rapid growth as a market and warehousing centre.

Situated on the Grand Canal, the town is a popular destination for fishing enthusiasts, while golfers are spoilt for choice with the nearby Esker Hills and Tullamore Golf Clubs offering pristine courses in scenic surroundings. Don't miss the opportunity to explore Offaly's monastic heritage by visiting the monastic gem of Clonmacnoise and nearby monastic sites including Lemanaghan and Rahan. If you've an inkling that your ancestors came from Offaly, drop into the Offaly History Centre on Bury Quay and talk to the helpful staff, you never know what you might find out!

For hikers, hill-walkers and lovers of the great outdoors, Tullamore is an ideal base to explore the Slieve Bloom Mountains – notably Ireland's least congested mountain range. You can hire a local guide or take off at your own pace, walking the peaceful way-marked trails and enjoying the uninterrupted sounds of nature!

The town offers a wide variety of accommodation from 4-star hotels to guest-houses and B&B's, plus plenty of eateries both in and around the town, catering to all tastes and appetites! And of course any mention of Tullamore wouldn't be complete without a word about the world-famous Tullamore D.E.W. whiskey.

Visitors to the town can now enjoy the sites and learn about their history through the new Tullamore Town Historical Tour, an audio tour that can be downloaded and listened to on your phone, tablet or apple device.



## 02 BIRR

### FEEL THE PAST...TOUCH THE PRESENT

The picturesque heritage town of Birr, developed around the Birr Castle estate of the Parsons family, the Earls of Rosse.

**With its handsome ensemble of Georgian architecture, there's a lot to like about Birr. The tree-lined malls and avenues of elegant houses dating from the 1800s tell a fascinating story. Heaving with history, Birr is one of Ireland's premier heritage towns and proud of its unique character spanning many centuries.**

Its most famous landmark, Birr Castle Demesne, has been the seat of the Parsons family - the Earls of Rosse - for fourteen generations. Today the Castle, Gardens & Science Centre attracts tourists throughout the year, captivated by the stunning formal gardens, the Great Telescope and the grandeur of the castle itself.

The town is also home to the renowned Birr Theatre – an essential regional stop-off for all major drama, dance, opera and comedy performances doing the national circuit. A great way to explore the town is to take either the Birr Town Trail or Riverbank Walk, with both routes starting from Emmet Square and covering a distance of just over 1km each.

Birr also has a rich monastic heritage and was home in the 6th century to St.Brendan, one of the "twelve apostles of Ireland". The original monastic site is probably close to the castle in William Street, behind wrought-iron gates of the old church and graveyard of St.Brendan.

In the late 8th or early 9th century when the monastery at Birr was at the height of its power, a scribe named Mac Regol wrote and illuminated an extraordinary manuscript. Although his images have been described as primitive, Mac Regol's gospel is recognised as a unique and important work of art. It is now in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. However beside the R.C. Church (Wilmer Road), in the library (tastefully converted from a Pugin designed convent chapel), is the only copy of the Four Gospels known as the Book of Birr or Macgregols Gospels.

Or, if you're after a more energetic bout of exercise, why not pay a visit to nearby Birr Equestrian Centre where Noel Cosgrave and his team offer riding lessons and cross-country treks 7 days a week. After which, you might need a sit-down and something to eat in one of the town's many restaurants, cafes and bistros!

Visit [www.visitbirr.ie](http://www.visitbirr.ie)



## 03 EDENDERRY THE SECOND LARGEST TOWN IN OFFALY

Edenderry is in north County Offaly and the Grand Canal runs along the south of Edenderry, through the Bog of Allen.

**Edenderry was established in medieval times and the ruins of Blundell Castle can still be seen with the new water tower adjacent on Blundell Hill. The castle shows phases from the early fifteenth century to the end of the seventeenth century when Edenderry House was constructed.**

The 2nd Marquess of Downshire is responsible for building the layout of much of the historic core of the present town in the 1800s with its pleasant layout, fine town houses, all provided with gardens. The keystones and entrance arches are a feature of the streetscape. There is an imposing statue of the Marquis of Downshire (1788-1845) looking down the Church Walk in the Church of Ireland grounds.

The ruins of the 12th century Anglo Norman castle at Monasteroris are on private land but can be seen from the road just outside Edenderry driving towards Rhode. It was built by the Anglo Norman family, the Berminghams. One of the Bermingham's sons founded the Franciscan Friary in 1325. The ruins of the Friary are adjacent to the road with public access. The graveyard contains some of the earliest carved headstones in the county from the late 17th and early 18th centuries.

Today Edenderry is a busy midlands town and it is the second biggest town in the county. The town, situated on the Grand Canal is an ideal spot for coarse fishing, walking/cycling the Offaly Way from Dublin through Kildare and all of Offaly to join the Shannon at Shannon Harbour.

The nearby Edenderry Golf Club offers a unique golf course built on the Bog of Allen where accuracy is a pre-requisite for success. The spectacular golf course is built on 130 acres of mature grounds boasts an abundance of mature trees and strategically placed bunkers, which makes it a challenging but fair test of golfing skill for all who play there. Edenderry is also located 11 kms from the Irish parachute/skydiving club in Clonbullogue. Open all year, the club is the longest established of its kind in Ireland, with approx 12,000 jumps made annually.

Croghan Hill, is the remains of an extinct volcano rising from the Bog of Allen in County Offaly. Though only 232 m high it commands extensive views of the surrounding midland counties, across the flat, low-lying expanse of the Bog of Allen. The village of Croghan is located on the southern slope of the hill. The mound at the summit of Croghan Hill is thought to be a bronze age burial place and the location has links to both St. Brigid and St. Patrick. It was also the final resting place of Old Croghan Man, the 2000-year-old bog body found in the area were kings of the Uí Failge (Offaly) were inaugurated.



*The 'Edenderry Audio Guide & Heritage Trail' will guide you through the history of Edenderry, learning about the major events in the town's history. Through fourteen audio tracks you can walk the trail and listen to the history of Edenderry.*

<http://www.abartaheritage.ie/product/edenderry-heritage-trail-audio-guide/>





# OFFALY

OUR COUNTY

ATHLONE

GALWAY  
M6

ROSCOMMON

RIVER SHANNON

Clonmacnoise  
Monastic Site



Clara Bog  
Nature Reserve

CLARA



Esker Hills  
Golf Club

Shannon  
Cruises



Lough Boora  
Discovery Park

Tulla



Pallas Lake

GALWAY

RIVER SHANNON

SHANNONBRIDGE

FERBANE

R357

N62

Offaly Way

R436

N52

BANAGHER

R439

KILCORMAC

N52

Birr Castle  
Demesne

Offaly Way

Birr Golf Club



KINNITTY

R440

BIRR

Slieve Bloom  
Mountains

Offaly Way

Slieve Bloom  
Way

TIPPERARY

N62

ROSCREA

M7  
DUBLIN



MONEYGALL  
(Obama Home)

M7

LIMERICK












WESTMEATH

VISITOFFALY.IE

OFFALY



LAOIS

- |   |             |   |                       |  |                      |
|---|-------------|---|-----------------------|--|----------------------|
|  | Walking     |  | Motorway              |  | Grand Canal Greenway |
|  | Cycling     |  | National Primary Road |  | Offaly Way           |
|  | Fishing     |  | Regional Road         |  | Bord Na Mona Walk    |
|  | Watersports |  | Trainline             |  | Slieve Bloom Way     |
|  | Golfcourse  |  | Town                  |  | River                |
|   |             |   |                       |  | Canal                |

## WHERE TO STAY...



### TULLAMORE COURT HOTEL

Just a short 5 minute walk from Tullamore Train Station, the Tullamore town centre hotel has something for everyone, luxury accommodation complimented by fine dining, extensive leisure facilities complete with 20 metre swimming pool and friendly professional staff.

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**Tullamore Court Hotel, O'Moore Street, Tullamore, Co Offaly**  
[www.tullamorecourthotel.ie](http://www.tullamorecourthotel.ie)  
☎ +353 57 9346666

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### BRIDGE HOUSE HOTEL

Located in the centre of the bustling town of Tullamore – just a short walk from the train station – this hotel will impress from the moment you walk into its stately foyer complete with crystal chandelier and grand marble staircase.

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**Bridge House Hotel, Bridge Street, Tullamore, Co Offaly**  
[www.bridgehousehotel.tullamore.ie](http://www.bridgehousehotel.tullamore.ie)  
☎ +353 57 9325600

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### CENTRAL HOTEL TULLAMORE

The Central Hotel Tullamore is located in the centre of the town. With close proximity to shops, restaurants, bars and Tullamore night life, the Central Hotel is a great choice whether you are travelling on business or enjoying a leisure break with family or friends.

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**The Central Hotel, Main Street, Tullamore, Co Offaly**  
[www.centralhoteltullamore.com](http://www.centralhoteltullamore.com)  
☎ +353 (0)57 9349300

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### DOOLY'S HOTEL

Situated in one of the oldest Coach Inns in the country, Dooly's Hotel stands in Emmet Square at the centre of the town. This comfortable boutique hotel has 17 guest-rooms, plus the award-winning Emmet Restaurant.

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**Dooly's Hotel, Emmet Square, Birr, Co Offaly**  
[www.doolyshotel.com](http://www.doolyshotel.com)  
☎ +353 (0)57 9120032

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## COUNTY ARMS HOTEL

4 star family run hotel with 70 bedrooms, in the heart of the heritage town of Birr with over 50 years of Loughnane Family Hospitality offers guests elegant accommodation with warm and friendly service.

County Arms Hotel, Birr, Co Offaly  
[www.countyarmshotel.com](http://www.countyarmshotel.com)  
 ☎ +353 (0)57 9120791



## KINNITTY CASTLE HOTEL

Nestling at the foothills of the Slieve Bloom Mountains and set in 650 acres of parkland, this stately 13th century castle has 37 lavish guest bedrooms complete with high ceilings, cast-iron roll top baths and original period features.

Kinnitty Castle Hotel, Kinnitty, Birr, Co Offaly  
[www.kinnittycastlelehotel.com](http://www.kinnittycastlelehotel.com)  
 ☎ +353 (0)57 9137318

# B&B, SELF-CATERING AND GLAMPING...



## ARDMORE COUNTRY HOUSE B&B

The cosy homely atmosphere of Ardmore Country House Bed and Breakfast in Kinnitty is a real treat for anyone looking for a refreshing and authentic Irish experience in a unique Irish home stay. Savor the flavor of great home produced food, enjoy the peace and quiet, the rest and relaxation.

Ardmore Country House B&B, Kinnitty, Co. Offaly | [info@kinnitty.com](mailto:info@kinnitty.com) | +353 (0)86 2789147



## BELLEFIELD HOUSE AND GARDEN SELF CATERING

Bellefield Cottages are set within the courtyard and at the entrance to an 18th century Georgian farmhouse. The cottages are converted from the farm and stable buildings of a former stud where a number of Grand National winners were bred in the 1950's. Visitors are welcome to visit and sit in the beautifully restored walled garden and avail of seasonal produce including fruit, vegetables and herbs. All the cottages are tastefully restored and individually decorated.

Bellefield House & Gardens, Birr, Co. Offaly | [angelajupe@gmail.com](mailto:angelajupe@gmail.com) | +353 (0)86 6002180



## GILTRAPS GLAMPING & TOWNHOUSE

One of Ireland's most recognised Glamping sites, established in 2015, Giltraps has welcomed many happy guests through its doors to enjoy this unique experience. Get closer to nature in this perfect setting of manicured gardens with camping bays, six Log Cabins and a Mongolian Yurt, imported directly from Ulaanbataar.

Giltraps Glamping & Townhouse, Kinnitty, Co. Offaly | [info@visitkinnitty.com](mailto:info@visitkinnitty.com) | +353 (0)57 9137076

Offaly has many different accommodation options from B&B to self-catering all over the county. To discover more go to; [visitoffaly.ie/Plan-your-Trip/Where-to-Stay/](http://visitoffaly.ie/Plan-your-Trip/Where-to-Stay/)



**OFFALY**

# DISCOVER IRELAND'S HIDDEN GEM...

**Offaly Tourism Marketing CLG**

c/o Tullamore Court Hotel  
O'Moore Street  
Tullamore  
Co. Offaly

T +353 579346800  
E [info@visitoffaly.ie](mailto:info@visitoffaly.ie)  
[visitoffaly.ie](http://visitoffaly.ie)

 [visitoffaly](https://www.facebook.com/visitoffaly)  [visitoffaly](https://twitter.com/visitoffaly)  [visitoffaly](https://www.instagram.com/visitoffaly)

