

carlow

through the waters of time

carlow



SOUTH EAST IRELAND





farming scene near hacketstown, co. carlow

photographs featured on the front cover in clockwise rotation: clashganny lock, near borris | bagenalstown viaduct walking in the blackstairs mountains | the haroldstown dolmen | mount wolsley, one of carlow's many fine golfing facilities | altamont gardens, near tullow.

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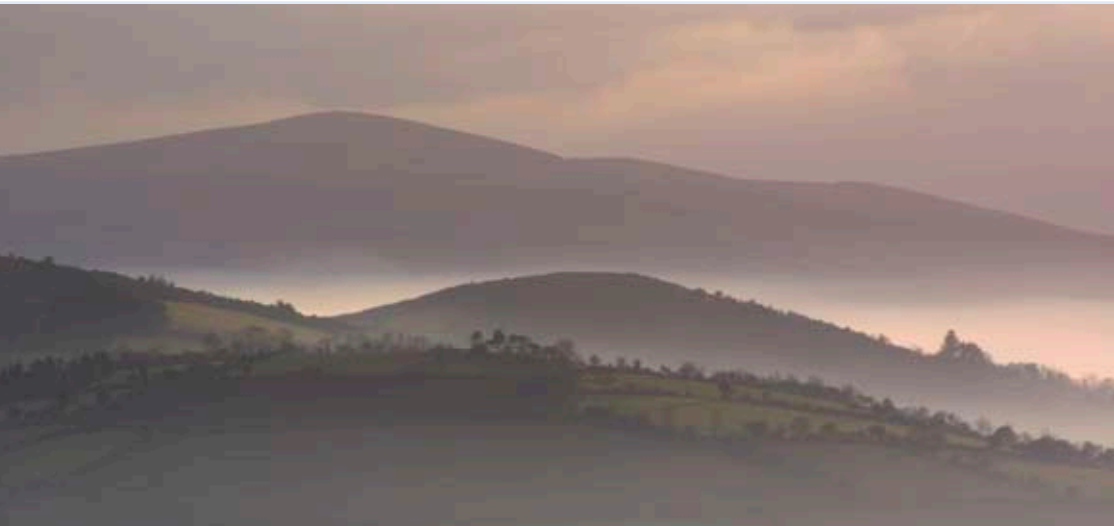


carlow

- Belfast	251 km
- Cork	190 km
- Dublin	84 km
- Dublin Airport	96 km
- Dun Laoghaire Harbour	96 km
- Rosslare Harbour	91 km
- Kilkenny	38 km
- Shannon Airport	179 km
- Waterford	80 km
- Waterford South East Airport	89 km
- Wexford	75 km

the story of carlow

through the waters of time



Trí Uisce na hÁrsaíochta

Ó thús ama tá mistéir Cheatharlach á choimeád beo ina aibhneacha. Le 6,000 bliain anuas tá uiscebhealaí draíochta ag lúbadh go séimh trí ghleannta réidh an chontae, ag cothú oidhreacht mhuintir Cheatharlach – a suíomhanna págánacha, a lonnaíochtaí Chríostaí, a dtithe is a ngairdíní iontacha Seoirseacha sa tuath, agus atá fós mar fhréamh beatha na mbailte agus na sráidbhailte gleoite cois abhann san aois seo.

Carlow ou Voyage à travers l'onde du temps.

Depuis la nuit des temps, les rivières de Carlow transportent les mystères de cette région. Ces cours d'eau qui serpentent paisiblement à travers les vallées ondoyantes du comté permettent l'acheminement des populations depuis maintenant six millénaires. Témoignages de leur passage dont nous pouvons aujourd'hui nous émerveiller: les antiques sites païens mystiques, les campements datant du début de la Chrétienté, les magnifiques demeures et jardins classiques de style anglais, sans oublier les villes et villages pittoresques bordant les rivières de Carlow.

Céad míle fáilte go Ceatharlach.

Since time began Carlow has carried her mysteries along her rivers. Waterways winding gently through the rolling valleys of this county have carried people from 6,000 years ago until now, and their legacy can be seen in its mystical ancient pagan sites, its early Christian settlements, its magnificent Georgian country homes and gardens, and its picturesque riverside towns and villages.



Die Geschichte Carlows im Wandel der Zeit.

Solange man zurück denken kann, hat sich die geheimnisvolle Geschichte Carlows entlang seiner Flüsse ausgebreitet. Diese Wasserwege winden sich durch eine malerisch seichte Hügellandschaft und lassen auf Schritt und Tritt eine 6000 jährige Geschichte lebendig werden. Herausragende Zeichen setzen die Mystikheidnischer Orte, das Erbe frühchristlicher Siedlerstätten, die Imposanz georgianischer Herrenhäuser, die Pracht großartiger Gärten und der Charme beschaulicher an Flußufern gelegener Marktflecken.

Against this timeless landscape, visitors will uncover a unique experience. Exhilarating outdoor adventure, traditional rural life, vibrant shopping and rich cultural heritage - come and find pure Ireland, the Carlow way.

Situated in the South East of Ireland, approximately 90 kms from Dublin, Rosslare and Waterford, Carlow is one of Ireland's most charming inland counties. Its central location offers the perfect base to explore the bordering counties of Wexford, Kilkenny, Wicklow, Kildare and Laois.

where rural life is a way of life...



In Carlow rural life is a way of life.

Animals graze peacefully in lush green fields, and with each cycle of nature, this verdant landscape evolves, revealing a new beauty.

In springtime witness emerald grass against a crisp blue sky, a sea of yellow corn rippling in a warm summer breeze, or golden sun on copper leaves as autumn falls.

The pace of life is unhurried in Carlow's rural towns and villages, with the famous Irish warmth and proud Celtic culture to be found in every quiet corner.





the mysteries of carlow's ancient heritage

Dolmens, standing stones, stone forts and burial chambers from 2,500 BC – Carlow's ancient monuments continue to intrigue.

Discover these ancient sites, tucked away in green valleys or up high on open countryside surrounded by an expanse of sky. Perhaps a moment of quiet contemplation here will provide insights into the secrets and mysteries contained within. At Brownshill, close to Carlow Town you will find Europe's largest portal dolmen, its capstone weighing more than 100 tonnes.

Carlow is a county with an exceptionally rich ecclesiastical heritage containing a number of sites of national significance. These include the monastic site at St. Mullins, the Romanesque doorway at Killeshin, the medieval Cathedral at Old Leighlin, the eighteenth-century College and the nineteenth-century Catholic Cathedral in Carlow Town as well as the impressive Adelaide Memorial Chapel at Myshall.

In 630 A.D. in Old Leighlin, a significant church synod was held which influenced the system for establishing the date of Easter each year, a formula

still used to this day. The architectural gem of the Adelaide Memorial Chapel in Myshall was built as a miniature of Salisbury Cathedral in England. Built by John Duguid of Dover in 1912 the chapel was designed to commemorate his wife Adelaide who died in 1903 and his daughter Constance who was killed in a riding accident near the village.

Carlow Town dates from the medieval age, when it was an important and bustling fortress town on the banks of the River Barrow. William de Marshall built an imposing castle here between 1207 – 1213 and two buttress towers still remain as testimony to former times.

With its thriving merchant town at the heart of rich agricultural land, Carlow became the most gentrified county in Ireland. Over 60 grand country homes and gardens were built throughout the county, and although revolution and abandonment caused the fall of many of these into ruin, they remain an evocative reminder of a belle époque. Others survive as living, breathing examples of by gone times and a number are open to visitors.



dolmens, standing stones, stone forts, burial chambers	2500BC
church synod discuss date of easter at old leighlin	630AD
st. moling's monastic settlement at st.mullins	7th century
st. moling's round tower at st.mullins	10th century
construction of carlow castle by william de marshall	13th century
60 grand country homes and gardens	17th-19th century

Ardattin
Bagenalstown
Ballon
Ballymurphy
Borris
Clonegal
Clonmore
Fenagh
Hacketstown
Kildavin
Killeslin
Leighlinbridge
Myshall
Nurney
Old Leighlin
Rathvilly
St. Mullins
Tinnahinch
Trimyland
Tullow

quiet country villages

Nestled in sleepy nooks along the Rivers Barrow and Slaney as they meander through undulating valleys are some of the most beautiful country towns and villages in Ireland.

Perched on the banks of the River Barrow with the impressive ruins of the Anglo-Norman “Black Castle” at its heart, the village of Leighlinbridge is a popular stop for those boating or walking along the river. This picturesque village was a Gold Medal winner in the European Entente Florale competition for its display of brilliant flowers, magnificent trees and relaxing parks. What better place to sit and contemplate on the beauty of nature.

At the end of the Wicklow Way is a little village called Clonegal where visitors can step back in time. An imposing granite castle, restored thatched weavers’ cottages, medieval herb garden, church, yew walk and Temple of Isis are all to be discovered along its peaceful winding streets.

Walter Bagenal had a grand vision for Bagenalstown – to model an 18th century Irish estate town on the city of Versailles and locate it on the River Barrow. The beautiful courthouse building is his main legacy to the town, which has leafy river walks and magnificent canal architecture.

The charming village of Borris with its traditional Irish street-front and spectacular mountain setting is home to Borris House, built by the Mac Murrough Kavanagh clan who were Celtic Kings of Leinster. At the foot of the village look for the spectacular 16 arch viaduct which carried the Great Southern and Western Railway Line as it travelled between Bagenalstown and Wexford in the 19th century.

Tullow is a busy market town. Its rich history is in evidence all around. The bustling market square, beautiful granite public buildings, the pre-historic ring fort of Rathgall plus the countless intriguing artefacts in Tullow Museum, all remain as evidence of Tullow’s fascinating rural heritage.









waterways

A flash of kingfisher blue,
the beat of a heron's wing,
the lazy plop of a jumping trout...

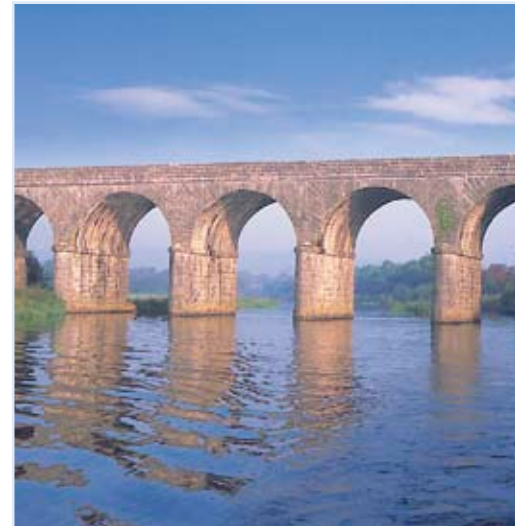
A journey along the gentle River Barrow takes the traveller to a tranquil bygone time. Fringed with reeds and river flowers, and harbouring a wealth of wildlife in her banks, the River Barrow bears boats and barges along 68km of navigable waterway past pretty riverside villages and through 23 Victorian locks. It is widely praised as one of the finest boating experiences in Europe.

From this area the historic Grand Canal offers navigable cruising as far west as the River Shannon and in an eastern direction through Kildare to Dublin. For those wishing to explore Ireland's extensive waterways, barges, both narrow and wide beam, are available for hire.

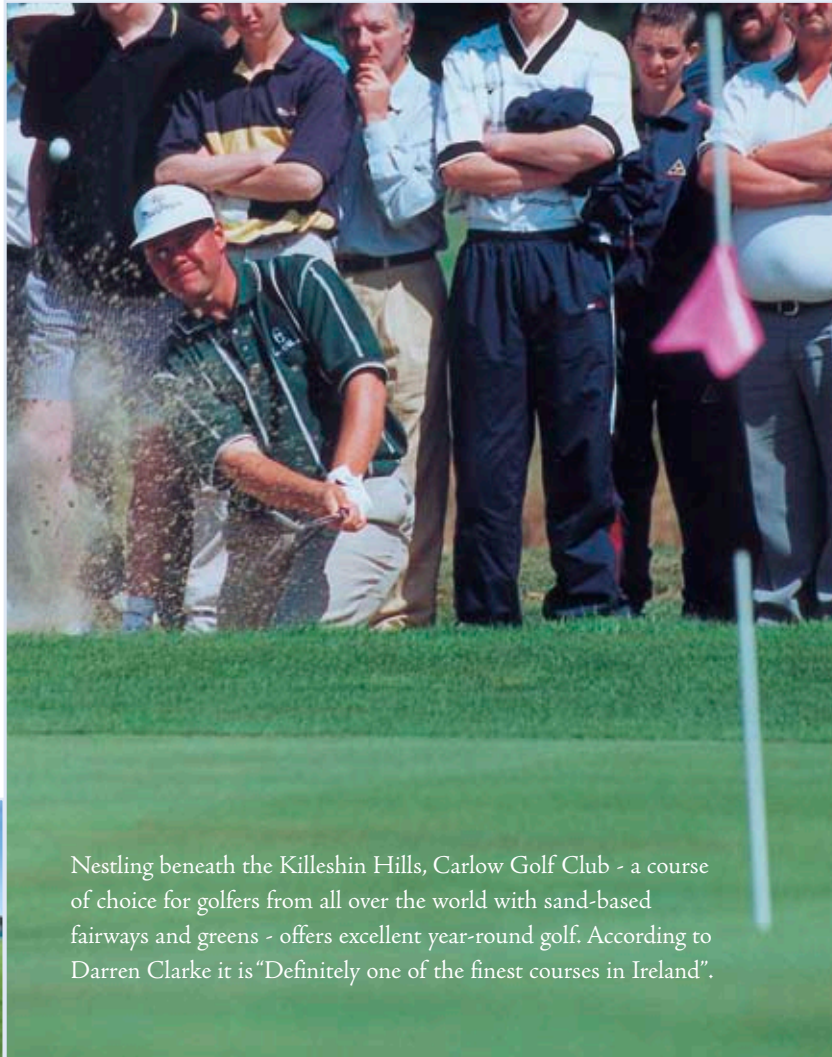
Here and there along its green banks, barges are moored, with visitors and locals taking picnics on languid afternoons. Since time began the River Barrow has borne the life of Carlow upon its slow moving waters. Today these waters provide a perfect opportunity to relax and enjoy activities such as boating, canoeing, angling and bird-watching.

The River Barrow offers excellent coarse fishing and plays host to a prestigious international annual shad fishing competition.

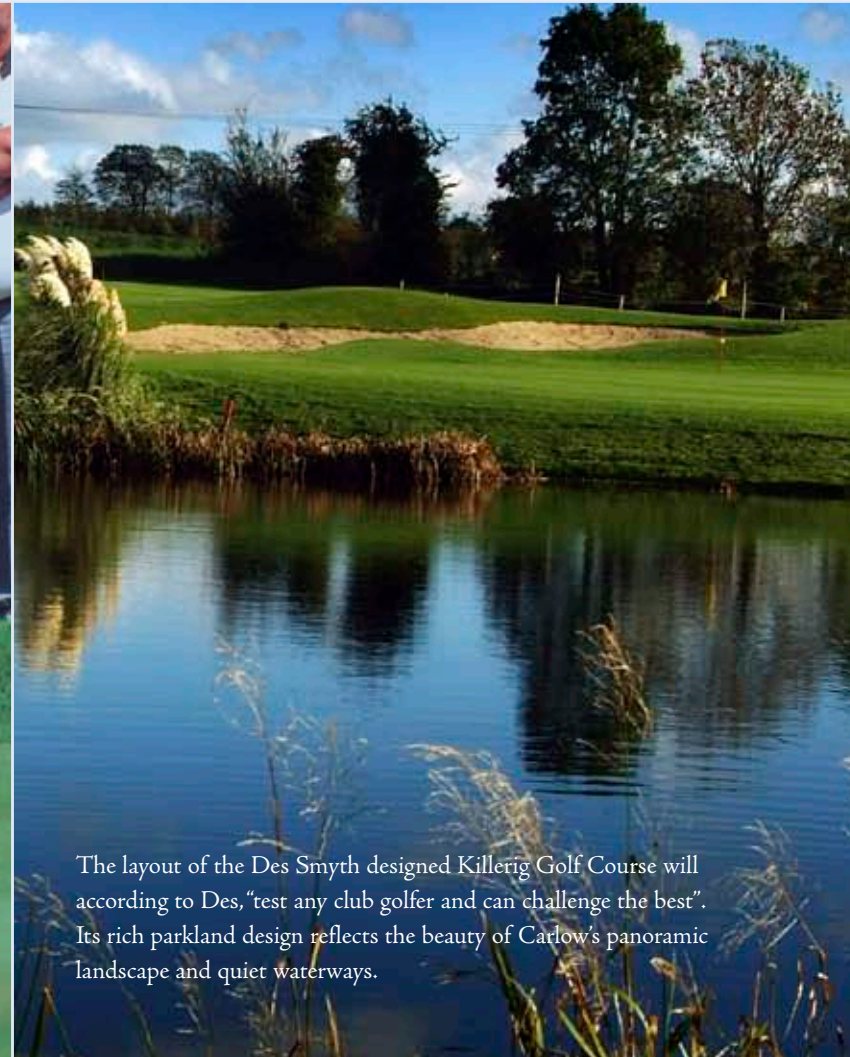
The River Slaney, which flows through the eastern part of the county, has varied and plentiful wildlife, with regular sightings of swans, dippers, wild ducks and herons. The kingfisher can be seen from time to time, while at dusk there are sightings of bats, owls and otters.



golf



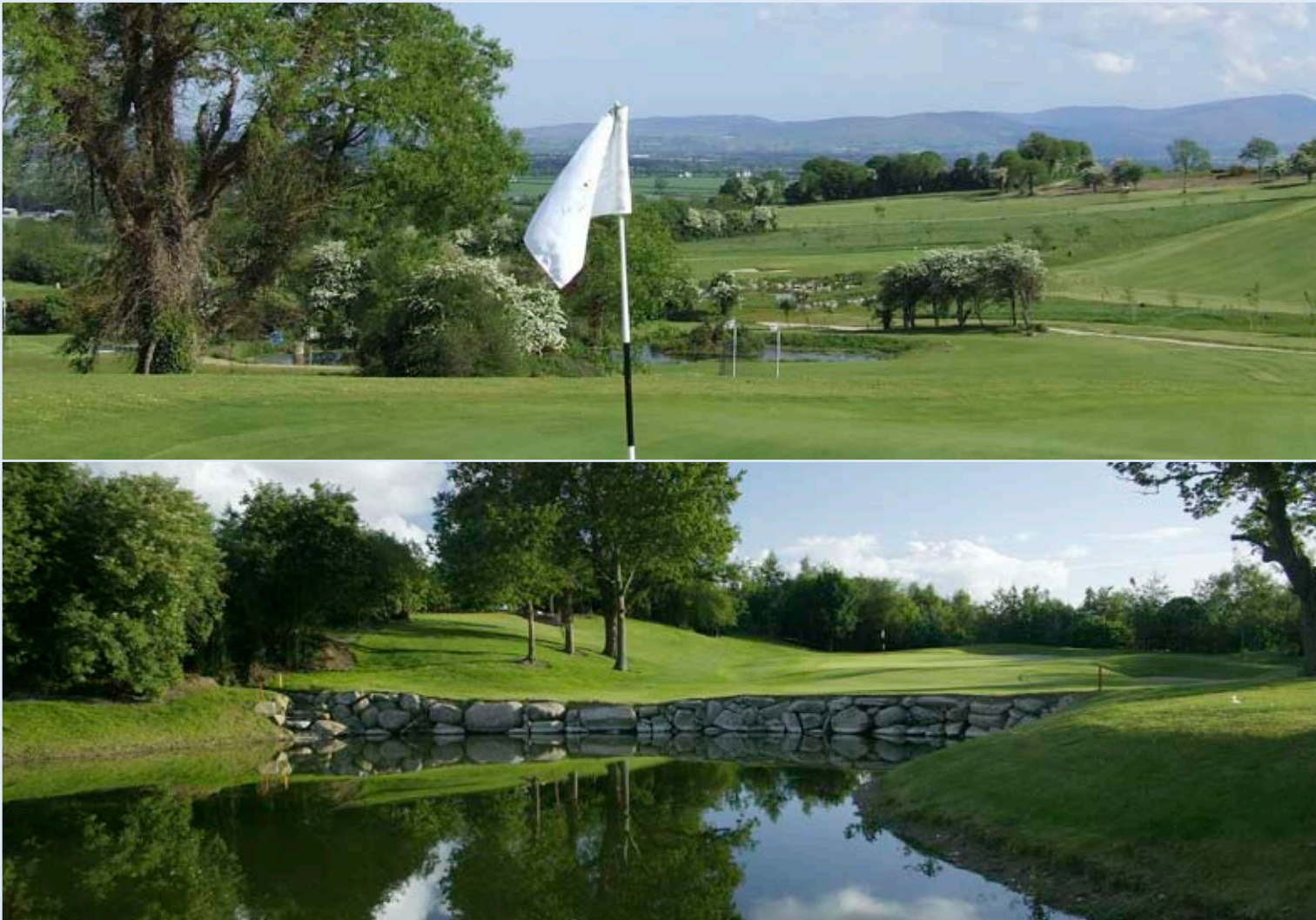
Nestling beneath the Killeshin Hills, Carlow Golf Club - a course of choice for golfers from all over the world with sand-based fairways and greens - offers excellent year-round golf. According to Darren Clarke it is "Definitely one of the finest courses in Ireland".



The layout of the Des Smyth designed Killerig Golf Course will according to Des, "test any club golfer and can challenge the best". Its rich parkland design reflects the beauty of Carlow's panoramic landscape and quiet waterways.



Set in beautiful surroundings Leinster Hills Golf Club is a unique golfing experience, on 200 acres of rolling Carlow countryside. The topography of this course is unrivalled and its layout and design maximizes the wonderful scenery around it.



Inspired and informed by the landscape, Carlow's five parkland golf courses offer an enjoyable test to golfers of all abilities.

The natural beauty of these courses merging with the surrounding landscape bears testimony to the game's origins.

Four of these, Carlow, Killerig, Leinster Hills and Mount Wolseley are championship courses which provide an exciting test of golfing skill, each course offering its own unique challenge.

Beside the magnificent Blackstairs Mountains you will find the renowned 9-hole Borris Golf Club. A picturesque 18 hole Par 4 course at Carrigleade and two 18 hole par 3 courses at Carlow and Tullow offer a warm welcome to golfers of all abilities. Bagenalstown Pitch and Putt Club is considered to be one of the best in the country in terms of design and is a source of both recreation and healthy exercise. For those wishing to hone their golfing skills, a trip to Carlow Golf Range with its weatherproof bays and well stocked pro-shop, provides the perfect location to practice in comfort.

Wherever you play golf in Carlow, a warm welcome is par for the course. Further details on golfing facilities in Carlow may be obtained in the Carlow Golf Trail publication available from Carlow Tourism and all Tourist Offices.

The Christy O'Connor designed Mount Wolseley Hotel Spa & Country Club with its broad fairways, unforgiving rough, and picturesque water hazards, has played host to a number of national and international golf competitions.

adventure

Unveil the landscape of this ancient and mystical county in all her natural splendour. Winding country lanes, leafy forest trails and open countryside offer the perfect terrain for discovery on bicycle, on horseback or on foot.

A walker's paradise, Carlow is home to three of Ireland's key national walking routes – The Leinster Way, The Wicklow Way and the Barrow Way which links with the Slieve Margy Way in County Laois. A number of shorter, looped walks have been added in recent years including those at Oak Park Forest Park and Clogrennan Wood, both close to Carlow Town, Kilbrannish Forest Recreation Area on the Blackstairs Mountains and Rath Wood Forest near Tullow. Experienced walkers will enjoy the invigorating challenge of Carlow's way-marked mountain treks, whilst novices will find peace and tranquility on quiet country walks. Visitors have the opportunity to discover these routes for themselves in the company of knowledgeable local guides during Carlow's Autumn Walking Festival held in October of every year.

The rush of adrenaline as foot leaves ground and spirit soars, hang-gliders experience this each time they swoop from the Blackstairs Mountains over the vast and panoramic river valley below. Take a river safari through these valleys, drift lazily downstream, or shout with excitement as your canoe shoots the playful rapids.

If you need a break, fresh air and stimulation, Carlow is the natural choice for your adventure break – from quading and biking to horse riding, canoeing, fishing, hang-gliding and walking – the opportunities are endless!







carlow town



Carlow Town, the county capital is strategically positioned at the meeting point of the Rivers Barrow and Burren where allegedly four lakes once stood, leading to the name of Ceatharlach.

Whilst exploring Carlow's winding streets and lanes be prepared for the unexpected, as the rich history of this busy market town offers something new at every turn. A one hour self-guided walking tour featuring identifiable finger signposts and large map boards brings its past history to life.

The culture and architecture of the cosmopolitan bars, shops and restaurants hints at Carlow's turbulent and dramatic Celtic past. Discover the fine detail of its history in the imposing cathedral, in the classical 1830s courthouse, in the remains of Carlow Castle and in the megalithic dolmen in Brownshill. Each one makes its own contribution to the story of Carlow.

But there is more to Carlow than simply its rich Celtic past. It is now a vibrant college town home to an array of magnificent public sculpture and, since 2009 the VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art and the George Bernard Shaw Theatre. VISUAL is one of Ireland's leading facilities for the presentation of local, national and international contemporary visual art as well as housing a magnificent theatre comprising 350 seats, a restaurant and bar. Standing in a strategic location in the centre of Carlow Town on the grounds of Carlow College, it rivals its contemporaries in New York, Berlin or Tokyo in terms of its scale and contemporary architecture. The theatre is named after the famed Irish playwright, George Bernard Shaw whose mother's family hailed from the town.

It is this dynamic combination of past and present that characterises Carlow's streetscapes. Experience its unique culture in its family friendly hotels, charming guesthouses and welcoming country homes to be found throughout the county.

urban life

The energy of Carlow pours from its clubs, pubs, café bars and restaurants onto the busy shopping streets.



Throughout the county visitors will discover an eclectic mix of speciality shops, boutiques and stores – a treasure trove for ardent shoppers. And between visits to the shops, relax and watch the world go by over a quiet pint or a cup of freshly brewed coffee in its many traditional pubs and coffee bars.

Choose from a diverse array of places to eat, including award winning restaurants serving fresh local produce and fusing the best of Irish, Continental and Asian cuisine for a truly international flavour.

A dynamic and vibrant nightlife kicks off in the evenings with live music and entertainment in Carlow's many cosmopolitan bars and clubs. Here and throughout the county you will find genuine live Irish culture in the language, music and tradition of this ancient land. Experience the excitement of a traditional Irish music session, or relax as storytellers recall ancient tales of battles won and love lost.





arts, crafts and artisan foods

In the 19th century, Carlow was renowned for the beauty and quality of its delicate handmade Borris Lace. Today, Carlow has an abundance of original, handmade crafts including pottery, ceramics, wood, ironwork and textiles. Often inspired by the unique landscape that surrounds them, these artists and craftspeople have created a wealth of beautiful and collectible pieces in both traditional and contemporary designs.

Each June Carlow celebrates the arts with “Éigse”, a critically acclaimed arts festival that showcases the work of Irish and International artists and performers. It boasts extensive visual arts, theatre performance, film, music, crafts and street entertainment programme. Visitors to the VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art and the George Bernard Shaw Theatre in the centre of Carlow Town, will be impressed by one of the largest and most sympathetic spaces for presenting contemporary and modern art as well as an extensive performing arts programme.

If you're looking for good, local produce then you won't go hungry during your visit to Carlow. Famed for the quality of its agricultural land, the county has a strong network of Farmers and Country Markets. They are an excellent way to shop for fresh local produce and very often you can meet the producer too! Foodstuffs available include fresh fruit, vegetables, meats, juices, cheeses, jams, chutneys and a vast array of home baking.



arboretum inspirational gardens | delta sensory gardens | duckett's grove historic house, walled gardens and pleasure grounds | hardymount gardens
herb gardens at kilgraney house | leighlinbridge – the garden village | oak park forest park | rath wood forest walks | altamont gardens.

carlow garden trail



There is no better way to understand Carlow's rural culture and rich past than to experience it for yourself. Houses such as Altamont House and Gardens, Borris House and Huntington Castle and Gardens all remain as living evidence of times past.

Often called the Floral County, throughout the summer the streets, parks and gardens of Carlow's towns and villages erupt into a sea of colour. Each August Carlow's Floral Festival Trail promises lots of floral fun and facts with gardening and floral workshops, arts and crafts demonstrations and musical performances. For the gardener the festival is a flower and garden extravaganza with informative lectures and demonstrations by some of the top names in gardening circles.

Take the time to visit the many open gardens throughout the town and county. The Carlow Garden Trail currently features 16 different gardening attractions including great old gardens that have been lovingly restored and maintained throughout the years, and smaller gardens which are maturing beautifully with time. Award winning garden centres and forest parks complement the joy of a visit here. Ranging from small to very large gardens, garden centres and forest parks and from old to new, there is something to stimulate both the novice and experienced gardener.



as the sun goes down...

Time for quiet reflection on a day well spent.

An early morning walk, a round of golf, a summit reached, a mountain drive, a glimpse of times past, a river trip, a meeting of minds, gentle conversations in local pubs – but now to bed – for who knows what tomorrow will bring.

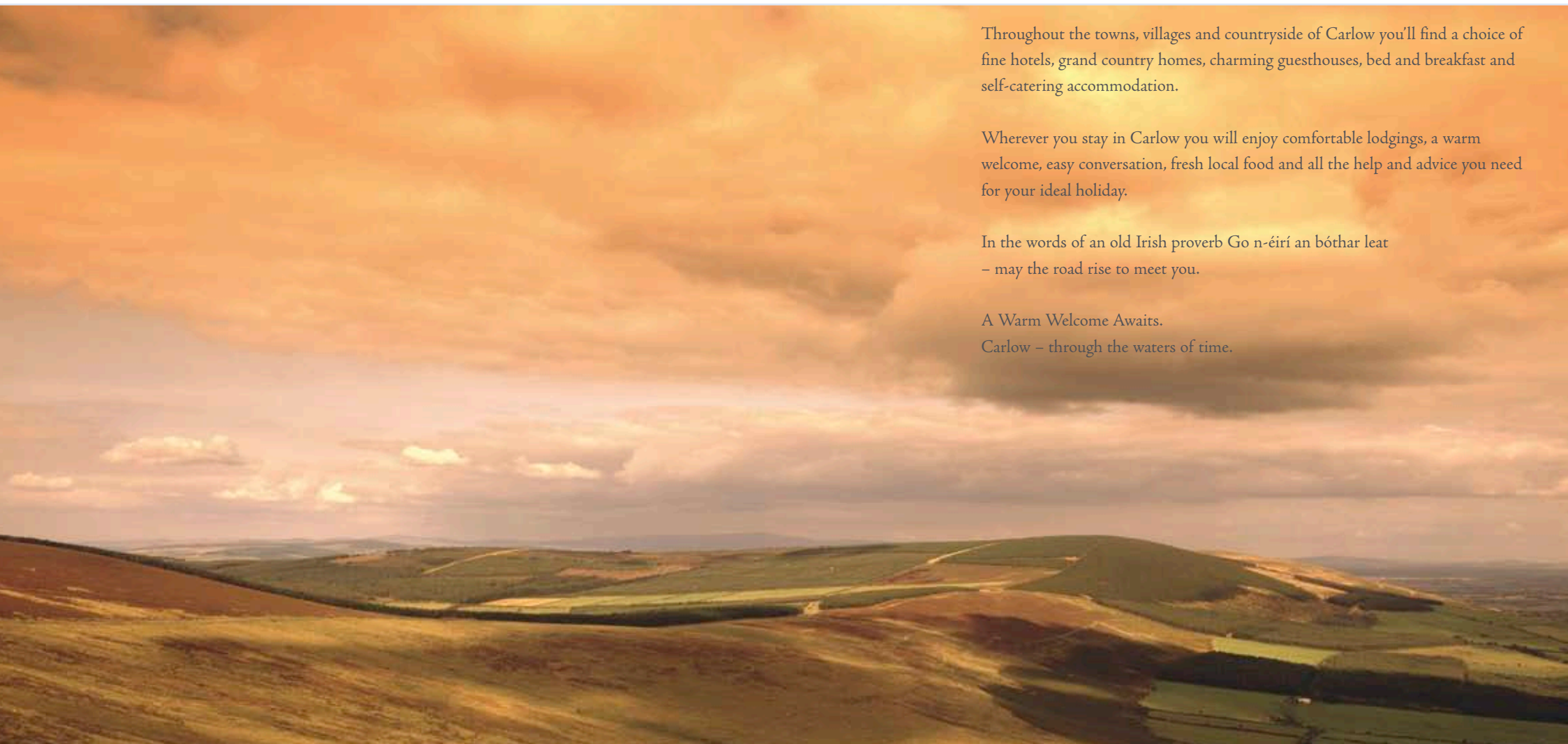
Throughout the towns, villages and countryside of Carlow you'll find a choice of fine hotels, grand country homes, charming guesthouses, bed and breakfast and self-catering accommodation.

Wherever you stay in Carlow you will enjoy comfortable lodgings, a warm welcome, easy conversation, fresh local food and all the help and advice you need for your ideal holiday.

In the words of an old Irish proverb Go n-éirí an bóthar leat
– may the road rise to meet you.

A Warm Welcome Awaits.

Carlow – through the waters of time.





- Stately Homes
- Dolmen
- Scenic Walks
- Fishing
- Golf / Par 3 Golf
- Heritage
- Carlow Tourist Office
- Museum
- Horse Riding
- Gardens

For further details on this brochure please contact
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w: www.carlowtourism.com

e: info@carlowtourism.com

canoeing on the river barrow | scenery close to the village of clonegal, often described as the switzerland of ireland | traditional music session

carlow

through the waters of time



Visit us online at: www.carlowtourism.com,
www.carlowgardentrail.com or www.carlowfloralfestival.com

For further information on Co. Carlow or to make an accommodation booking please contact:

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Carlow Tourism also provides a full range of literature on the County Carlow area.

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The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in Rural Areas



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