

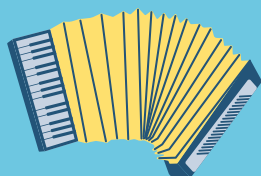


# Lough Derg

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## Discovery Guide

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**Adventure trails legendary tales**



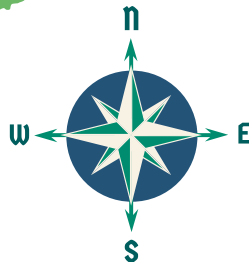
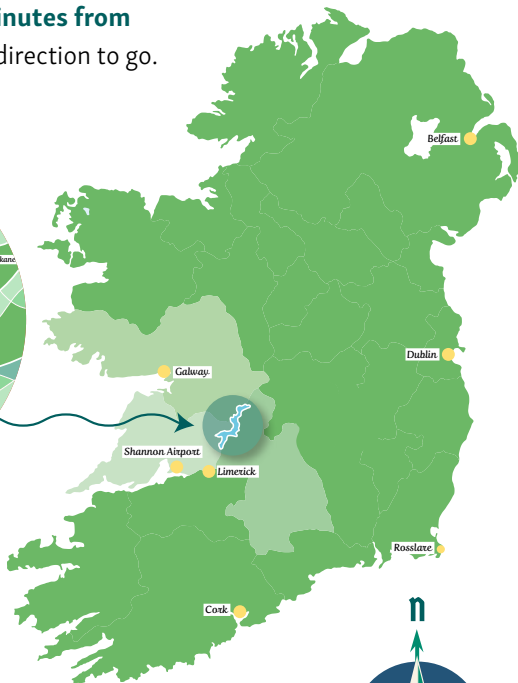
Enjoy the legendary vibe  
of Lough Derg



# Head in the right direction

Lough Derg is so easy to get to. Right in the heart of Ireland, it's a simple commute from cities, towns and airports with sustainable transport links making it easy on both you and our environment.
















Just a **two-hour drive from Dublin, 50 minutes from Shannon Airport, an hour from Galway** and only **20 minutes from Limerick**, Lough Derg is the direction to go.



Check out [Rome2Rio.com](https://Rome2Rio.com) for travel tips to Lough Derg from anywhere in the world



# Find your way

-  Walking Trail
-  Cycle Trail
-  Paddling Access Point
-  Lake Boat Hire / Sailing
-  Boat Trips
-  Golf
-  Tourist Information Point
-  Berths
-  Campsite / RV
-  Café
-  Cinema
-  Swimming Pool
-  Blue Flag Beach
-  Historical Sites or Genealogy Centres
-  Aqua Park



Map out your  
adventure trails  
and legendary tales



# Get right to the heart of it

Ireland's Hidden Heartlands is all about getting right to the heart of Ireland. It means slowing your pace, taking your time and enjoying your perfect break. There's lots to unpack, to learn, to savour and to enjoy.

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## Lough Derg – where Adventure Trails meet Legendary Tales

Right at the core of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands is the utter gem of Lough Derg, where adventure trails meet legendary tales.

Lough Derg provides the perfect backdrop for plenty of adventure and a great big dose of chill.

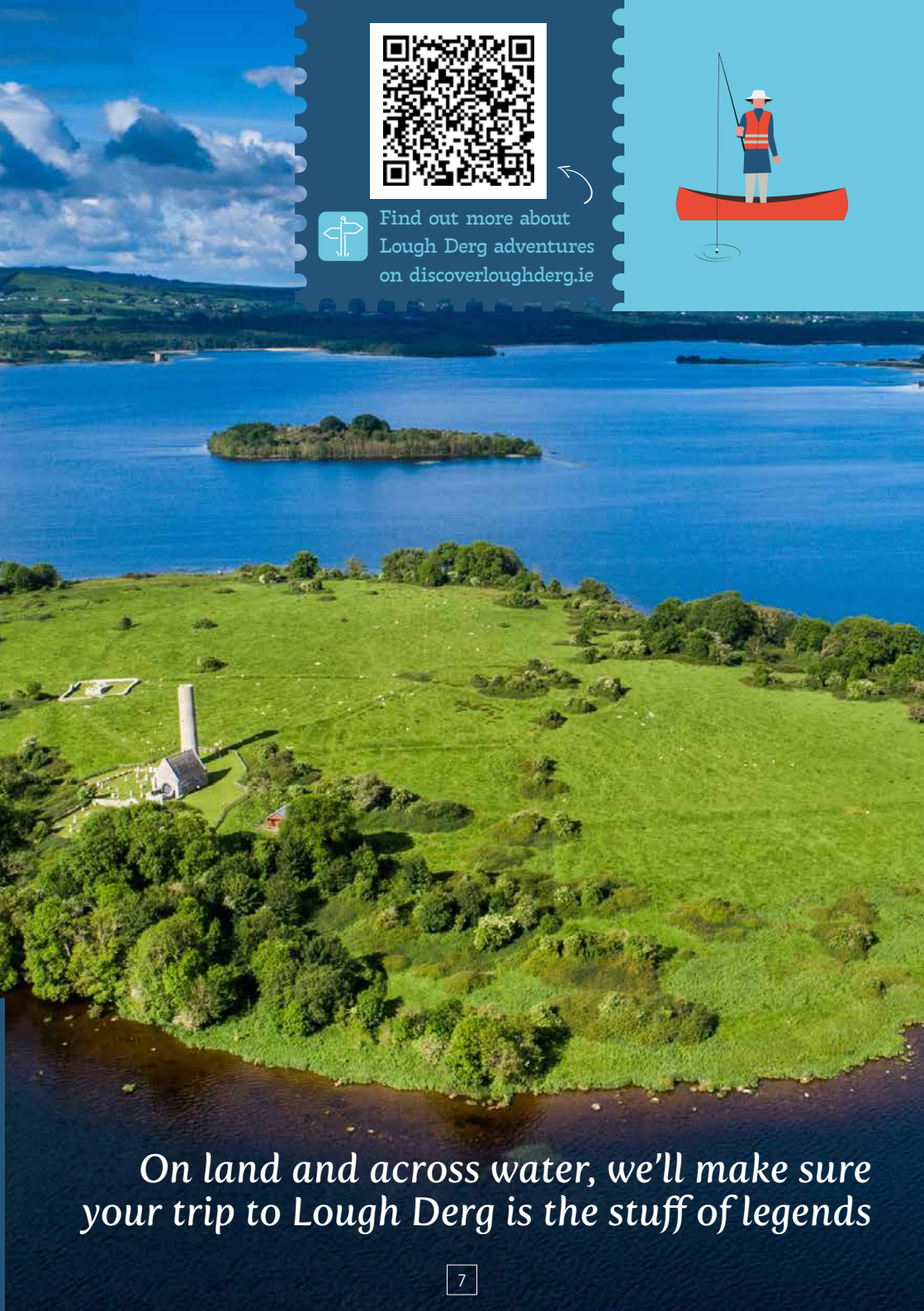
We'll enchant you with the legendary tales that make Lough Derg really stand out. Packed full of heritage, classic old castles and fascinating stories, Lough Derg is truly legendary.

We'll welcome you to a home from home – maybe a stay in a pod for a night under the stars, a big Lough Derg style welcome at one of the many places to stay or the lure of the buffet breakfast at one of our stunning hotels.

You can spend your days exploring all sorts of trails through forests, mountains and valleys, and getting stuck into the main feature – the great lake of Lough Derg.



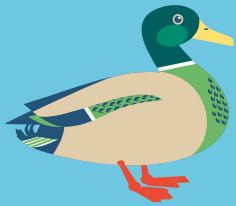
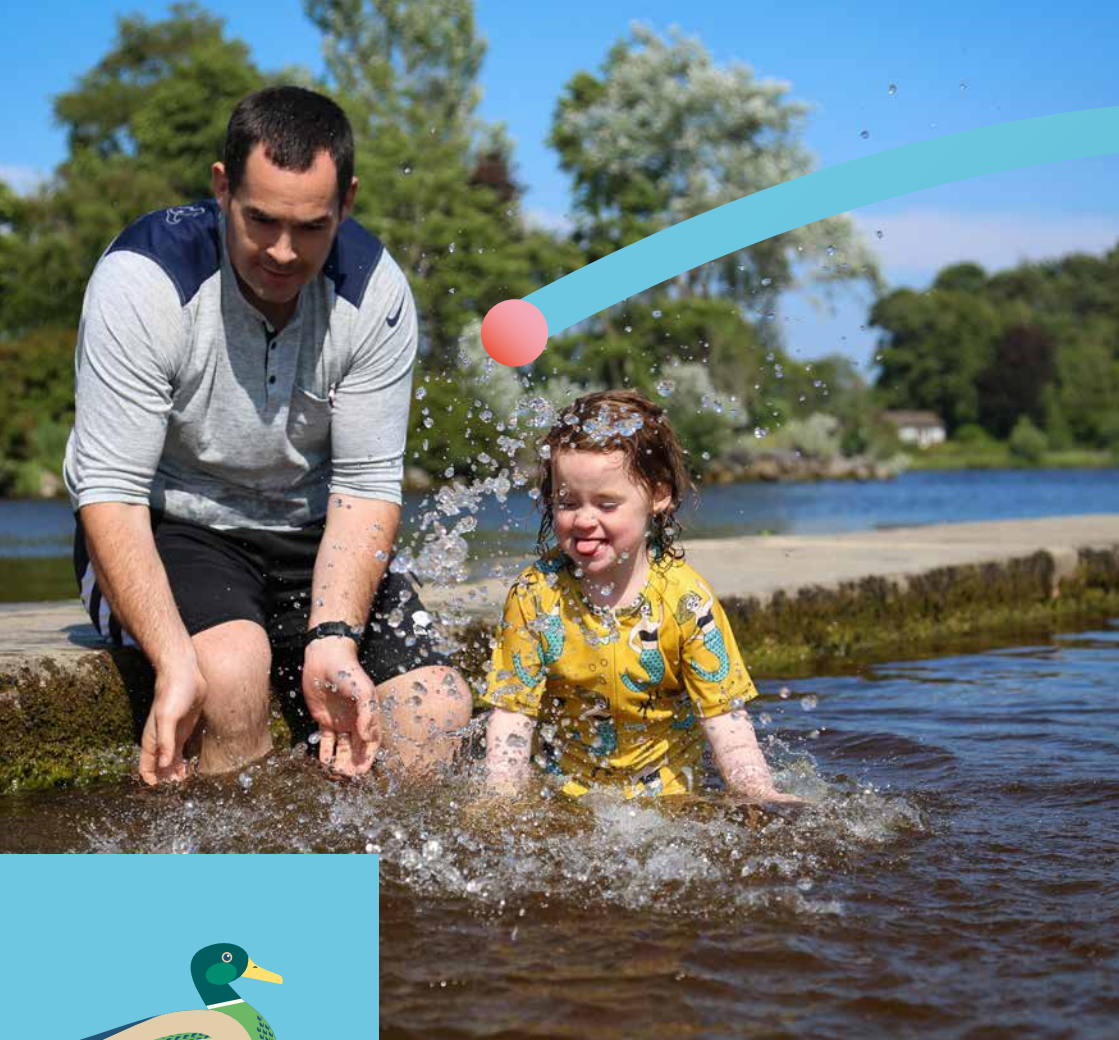




Find out more about  
Lough Derg adventures  
on [discoverloughderg.ie](https://discoverloughderg.ie)



*On land and across water, we'll make sure  
your trip to Lough Derg is the stuff of legends*



# Dive in and make a splash

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We have miles of shoreline around Lough Derg for you and your gang to make a splash. There are blue flagged beaches at Mountshannon, Two Mile Gate, Loughrea and Portumna so you are guaranteed the best of the bunch.



Check out our Instagram highlights for handy hints like where to find our blue flagged beaches





Visit our website to explore our interactive map and Blueway Trail explainer videos

# Lough Derg Blueway, do it your way

Bringing it all together are the miles of breath-taking Blueway trails which bring you right to the core of what makes this area so special. Discover this majestic lake and savour idyllic views of tree-lined shores, island-dotted bays, mountain top views, tranquil quays, colourful villages and marvellous wildlife on Ireland's third-largest lake. The Lough Derg Blueway has 21 individual paddling trails along its entire 180km shoreline, as well as various walking and cycling trails. You can hike, bike, paddle or sail; all you have to do is choose your way.



# Putter about on our courses

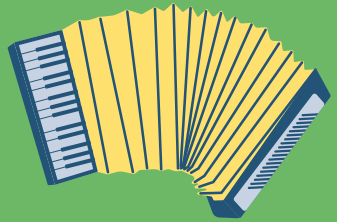
Whether you're a wannabe pro or just enjoy a putter about, you can tee off at a range of golf courses around Lough Derg. Our courses aren't just about the golf – they get you out into the beautiful natural settings of Lough Derg. From the acres of parkland at Nenagh and Ennis to the mountainous background at Roscrea; the natural forest park of Portumna to the panoramic views and natural water features of East Clare Golf Club, we have you covered.



## Music to our ears

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For a simple little trad session in the pub, a village fete or a full weekend arts festival, we always have something on the go to suit your pace. Everynight of the week, there's live music around the lake, from Shortt's in Feakle which has been playing live music every Thursday night for over half a century to the spirited Sunday sessions at renowned spots like the Washerwoman and Larkins, so you can move to the rhythm every night of the week.



Check out Instagram highlights for what's happening right now



Find out more about  
Lough Derg's artisans at  
[discoverloughderg.ie](http://discoverloughderg.ie)



## We're pretty crafty

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The people of Lough Derg are fabulous producers so it's unlikely you'll go home empty handed. We have scarfs weaved from ancient looms at McKernan's Woollen Mills, stylish merino and cashmere knitwear from Hanly's, and a selection of funky and unique artwork and pottery from local artist Lynn Kenny. That's before we've even started on the local chocolates, cheeses, breads and beverages!



# Adventure in the palm of your hand

If you're looking for a bit of a challenge, you've got it. Download our fun, interactive Lough Derg Adventure APP to guide you through outdoor activities around the lake, with top tips on handy amenities close to the trails with a little pinch of folklore.



Scan me to download our App







The best part is dropping them back in! Make sure you know all about our fish friendly maintain and release policy

# Get hooked on Lough Derg

Relax on a boat in the middle of the vast lake with superb views and the chilled out pace of fishing. We have lots of providers who will kit you out to give it a go and plenty of little pontoons around the lake for access. Try it once and you'll be hooked.



Check out our **Legendary Food Trail** on [discoverloughderg.ie](https://discoverloughderg.ie)



# Get a real taste of Lough Derg

Lough Derg has you well catered for! There are lots of local producers where you can pick your own food and learn a little about how to produce it. Local honeys, cider, cheese and chocolate will give you a real taste of Lough Derg life.

You can browse a Farmers' market for goodies and pack up a picnic for the lakeshore, check out some hearty home cooked food in a local café or savour a mouthwatering 4 Star menu from one of our hotels. You'll not go hungry!





Find out more about  
Lough Derg's heritage  
trails on our website  
[discoverloughderg.ie](http://discoverloughderg.ie)



# Getting back to your roots

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Did your cousin's cousin's cousin come from Clare or is your paternal Grandpa a native of Nenagh? You can't visit Lough Derg without putting down some roots so if you want to find out if you have any links to this much loved part of Ireland, now is your chance. Start off with the Nenagh Genealogy Centre in Tipperary, Ennis Genealogy Centre or Woodford Heritage Centre in East Galway either of which might give you much more to take home than you expected!



# And the rest is history

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With such a variety of culture and heritage, it's no surprise that Lough Derg has such a great selection of museums and galleries for daytime mooching and catching up with your history.

Start off at the Thomas McDonagh Museum which has lot of interesting snippets and artefacts about the Tipperary poet and 1916 Easter Rising leader. The McDonagh family have an impressive history and include a nun, a singer/songwriter, a Government Minister and a founder of the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Or you can get up to date with one of Ireland's first hydroelectric schemes at Ardnacrusha Power Station. Almost a century old, you can find out how it was built and get right to the source of how it operates. If art is more your thing, catch up with The Bridge Creative Art Centre which has some great reflections of the area, fabulous local arts and crafts and regular exhibitions on the go.





Scan me to find great places to stay

# Accommodation

This is the important bit. Now you've mapped out your adventure trails and legendary tales, you'll want to pick the ideal place to base yourself. We have lakeside campsites, four-star hotels, homely B&Bs and close to nature glamping, and quirky cottages to rent. Lough Derg has plenty of accommodation to suit all tastes and budgets. Lough Derg is the ideal place to explore from the luxury of a moving home like a boat or RV. Check out the picture perfect RV site at Portumna Marina with forest walks, castles and great places to hang out. You may not want to move on.





From festivals celebrating ancient heroes to big sporting challenges, we're always changing the pace so you'll find your vibe. Check out [discoverloughderg.ie](http://discoverloughderg.ie) for info

# Festivals

Make your trip magnificent by catching up with our legendary night life. Whatever time of year you visit, Lough Derg will have something on the go.

There are traditional bands in bars, bespoke arts festivals, and relaxing, chillout tunes to choose from. If sport is your thing, you'll find challenges, regattas and racing to get stuck into. Or you can just watch from the shore. That's always an option at Lough Derg.



# Slow down and relax

Lough Derg is the perfect place to slow it down. For a romantic getaway, a family holiday or a trip with friends. You can pick from micro adventures, road trips and glamping. Whatever floats your boat.

Whatever your choice, you can slow down, de-celerate and put on the brakes, for the perfect go-slow break.

*Just show up and  
we'll take care of  
the sunsets*

## The 5 rules of slow tourism

- 1 Take your time
- 2 Experience nature
- 3 Discover the unknown
- 4 Meet new people
- 5 Get a taste of local produce



## 5 ways to get stuck into the legendary vibe of Lough Derg



Check Adventure  
Lough Derg App to find  
playgrounds dotted  
around the lake

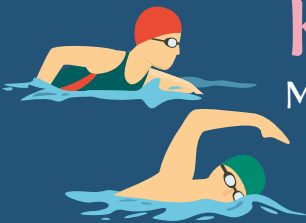


Having fun at the Lakeside  
Leisure Centre

5

## Top activities for KIDS AND TEENS

Make weekends Legendary







Lough Derg provides one big playground for kids and teenagers with loads of opportunities for adventure. Whether they want to explore an enchanted forest, learn to fish or ride a horse, there is plenty of opportunity to make weekends Legendary.

**I**

- What** Derg Isle Adventure Centre
- Where** Carrowmore, Scariff, Co Clare
- How** [www.dergisle.com](http://www.dergisle.com)



Experience the marvels of nature from the water through kayaking, canoeing, paddleboarding or navigating the lake with a rented boat along secure and predetermined routes. On land, engage in activities such as archery, a climbing wall, and an obstacle course inspired by the challenges seen on “Ireland’s Fittest Family.”

And if the fancy takes you, call by Wilde Irish Chocolates for chocolate drops, chocolate slices, chocolate fudge, hot chocolate... pretty much all the chocolate you can eat!



**2**

- What** Tearaways Pet Farm
- Where** Rathcabbin, Co Tipperary
- How** [www.tearaways.ie](http://www.tearaways.ie)



All kids get a kick out of being up close to their favourite fluffy animal and they can get their fill of bunnies, goats and donkeys with the added thrill of alpacas, llamas and an emu at Tearaways Pet Farm. An active farm that really gets what kids are after, the space is packed with slides, a games , go kart track and the very popular barrel train. And there’s a cosy coffee area for parents to watch their children tire themselves out completely!



3

**What** Slieve Aughty Centre

**Where** Kylebrack, Co Galway

**How** [www.slieveaughtycentre.com](http://www.slieveaughtycentre.com)



Explore the forests and quiet county roads of Lough Derg with the least effort possible by booking a trek at Slieve Aughty. You can head off for a day long tour or keep it simple with a pony ride around the Enchanted Forest. This ecofriendly equestrian and activity centre has plenty of activities for kids with easy looped walks, a craft room and play area.



4

**What** Lough Derg Aqua Splash & West Lake Aqua Park

**Where** Dromineer, Co Tipperary & Ballycuggeran, Co Clare

**How** [www.aquasplash.ie](http://www.aquasplash.ie) and [www.westaquaparks.ie](http://www.westaquaparks.ie)



A massive splash in Lough Derg could be the highlight of the kids' entire trip. A guaranteed energy burner, they can run, slide, bounce and splash around these massive inflatable parks. The whole family can take on the challenge of conquering the obstacles or just muck about getting wet; either way, it's huge amounts of fun.



5

**What** Pallas Karting & Paintballing

**Where** Tynagh, Loughrea, Co Galway

**How** [www.pallaskarting.com](http://www.pallaskarting.com)

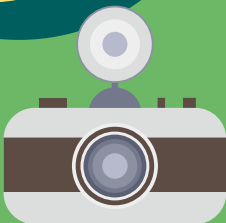


If you're over 14 and like to be in control of the thrills, check out Pallas Karting and Paintballing. There are three tracks, so you can go from beginner to full throttle and time your laps to appeal to your competitive streak. You can also channel your inner warrior with a challenging and fun team paintball session.



Scan here for more information on Lough Derg's legendary historical sites

5



## Top tours for HERITAGE FANS

Soak up the heritage before a splash in the lake



Lough Derg has some of the most interesting and significant heritage sites in Ireland and it's bursting with legendary tales. Find out all about the local history and what makes this area so special with a variety of heritage-based tours.

**I**

- What**
- Where**
- How**

**Holy Island Tours**  
 Mountshannon Pier, Co Clare  
[www.holyisland.ie](http://www.holyisland.ie)



Holy Island, also known as Inis Cealtra, encompasses an ancient monastic settlement with the remnants of numerous small churches and a sacred well. A highly knowledgeable local historian, and exemplary OPW Guide, offers comprehensive historical insights into the surrounding area, providing an up-to-date understanding of its rich history and significance.



**2**

- What**
- Where**
- How**

**Portumna Castle & Gardens**  
 Portumna, Co Galway  
<https://heritageireland.ie/places-to-visit/portumna-castle-and-gardens/>



The stunning 17th Century Portumna Castle sits right on the shore of Lough Derg with an unbeatable view of the great lake. The ground floor is open to the public with an exhibition telling the story of the Castle owners and how the building has been restored over the years. You can choose a 45-minute walking tour or stroll around the grounds, walled garden and Castle marina at your own pace.

3

**What****Where****How****St. Flannan's Cathedral**

Killaloe, Co Clare

[www.discoverireland.ie/clare/killaloe-cathedral-and-churches](http://www.discoverireland.ie/clare/killaloe-cathedral-and-churches)

Killaloe is one of the prettiest little towns around Lough Derg and is packed full of heritage and culture. To get a good grip on the significance of all its history, spend a leisurely couple of hours visiting the eye-catching 12<sup>th</sup> Century St Flannan's Cathedral, learning about its history and the relevance of the Ogham stone.

4

**What****Where****How****Irish Workhouse Centre**

Portumna, Co Galway

[www.irishworkhousecentre.ie](http://www.irishworkhousecentre.ie)

Portumna Workhouse operated for 70 years before workhouses were abolished in 1921. The building was revived in 2011 as an education, conservation and tourism project. A tour of the building tells the story of how workhouses ran, showcases some of the original furniture and explains the workhouse system. The building is also the base for the Tourist Information Point.

5

**What****Where****How****Nenagh Castle**

Nenagh, Co Tipperary

[www.discoverireland.ie/tipperary/nenagh-castle](http://www.discoverireland.ie/tipperary/nenagh-castle)

Lough Derg has plenty of historic buildings to explore, many of them in great condition and easily accessible. Nenagh Castle is a 13<sup>th</sup> Century, beautifully restored, high tower. An internal stone spiral staircase leads visitors 101 steps to the top of the 100 feet building which has perfect views of the thriving town of Nenagh.



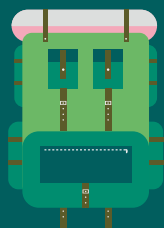


Interact with our map on [discoverloughderg.ie](https://discoverloughderg.ie) for a hike to suit your crew



# 5

## Top HIKES & TRAILS



Push your way through an adventure trail or paddle your own path along Lough Derg's calm waters, discover unexpected historical wonders, like the intriguing Brian Boru's fort, and let the exploration unfold.



Lough Derg has a huge variety of trails for all levels of fitness, ability or mood. You can meander along a forest path or paddle along the lake with all the time in the world. Or you might ramp up the challenge and hike or bike an adventure trail to the top of the mountain to take in the best views of the lake. It's over to you...

# I

**What**

## Nenagh Cycling Hub

**Where**

Nenagh, Co Tipperary

**How**

[www.sportireland.ie/outdoors/cycling-on-road/trails/nenagh-cycle-hub-loop-1](http://www.sportireland.ie/outdoors/cycling-on-road/trails/nenagh-cycle-hub-loop-1)



A network of marked cycling routes branching out from Nenagh's Banba Square leads cyclists through scenic countryside, lakeside villages and quiet country roads. All routes are numbered and signposted along the way to keep you right.



# 2

**What**

## Woodland Cycling Trail

**Where**

Portumna Forest Park

**How**

<https://www.visitportumna.com/sdforestpark.html> and [www.dicksbikehire.ie](http://www.dicksbikehire.ie)



Portumna Forest Park has a variety of cycle trail options with Woodland Cycling Trail a great choice for families. The surface changes from gravel to tarmac to boardwalk, stays fairly flat and includes a viewing platform and duck pond for a quick regroup.

3

**What** Garrykennedy Forest*Family Friendly Walk***Where** Garrykennedy, Co Tipperary**How** Pick up all the details on the handy map at the harbour

The beautiful village of Garrykennedy hosts a range of short, looped walks through the forest which are ideal for families and those who want an easy pace. Pick up the trail by the harbour where a handy map displays the options and tells you a little about the history and layout of the area. The loops are a lovely way to see the forest - just make sure you look out for the mini fairy doors as you go.

4

**What** Ballycuggeran*Long Distance Hike***Where** Start at Rinnaman Point (Two-mile Gate), Killaloe, Co Clare**How** [www.discoverireland.ie/clare/ballycuggeran-crag-wood-walk](http://www.discoverireland.ie/clare/ballycuggeran-crag-wood-walk)

Embrace the dense forested landscape with incredible views over Lough Derg on this challenging looped walk. Traversing hillsides and uplands over 7.12km, the Crag Wood Walk trailhead also connects to the East Clare Way. Taking around two hours to complete, the Ballycuggeran Crag Wood Walk follows a pleasant mix of forest road, forest track and a minor road.

5

**What** A Historic Trail**Where** Graves of the Leinstermen carpark**How** [www.sportireland.ie/outdoors/walking/trails/graves-of-the-leinstermen-looped-walk](http://www.sportireland.ie/outdoors/walking/trails/graves-of-the-leinstermen-looped-walk)

Catch some of the most spectacular views of Lough Derg and the surrounding counties with 6km loop near Tountinna Mountain. The path will take you through remote countryside, past the renowned Graves of the Leinstermen where the King of Leinster and his army are said to have met their deaths.



Find out all you  
need to know about  
water safety on  
[discoverloughderg.ie](http://discoverloughderg.ie)



5

## Top activities ON THE WATER

Why not unwind by letting off  
some steam in the tranquil  
waters of Lough Derg?





Slow right down on the lake by taking out a paddle board, canoe or kayak to explore at your own steady pace, or speed things up with some challenging water activities. It's over to you.

I

**What** UL Sport Adventure Centre

**Where** Ballcuggeran, Killaloe, Co Clare

**How** [www.ulsport.ie/ulac/](http://www.ulsport.ie/ulac/)



To get active on the water, get started with the UL Sport Adventure Centre. You can learn to canoe, kayak, paddle board and windsurf with enthusiastic and well-trained instructors. You might even have a go on the giant stand up paddle boards and get your family to race against your rivals. Or have a go at the water orienteering which is a great way to navigate a safe water course on the Lough.

2

**What** Killaloe River Cruises

**Where** Ballina Pier, Co Tipperary

**How** [www.killaloeRiverCruises.com](http://www.killaloeRiverCruises.com)



If you want to get out onto the water but prefer someone else to do the hard work, Killaloe River Cruises offer one-hour cruises of the lake and the River Shannon. You can sit back and take in the scenery and wildlife while a handy commentary fills you in on all the juicy legends.

3

**What** Travel by cruiser

**Where** Along the necklace of towns and villages on the Lough Derg shore

**How** <https://www.discoverireland.ie/guides/cruise-holidays-and-boat-trips>

Hire your own boat and have complete freedom about where you choose to go each day. You can pull up at towns and villages around the lake, grab some food, explore the heritage and get involved in many of the events going on around Lough Derg. Or just cruise at your own pace and eat onboard watching the sunset. Either way, it's pure bliss.



4

**What** Bring your own kit

**Where** Anywhere on the lake

**How** <https://discoverloughderg.ie/category/blueway-trails/>

The key attraction of Lough Derg is the lake itself; with miles of wide-open spaces interspersed with sheltered quays and marinas, it's the ideal setting for a bit of fun on the water. So if you're a kayak or paddleboard fan, why not pack up your own equipment and see how it floats on Lough Derg.



5

**What** Heated outdoor pool

**Where** Ballina, Co Tipperary

**How** Opening Daily from June to August

If you fancy a little less chill than the open water, have a dip in the heated outdoor pool in Ballina. This riverside pool is a real focal point in Ballina and perfect for a swim in any weather.



## Leave No Trace

We love sharing Lough Derg, and sharing our adventure trails and legendary tales. It's a special region with huge areas of outstanding natural beauty and thousands of years of history and mystery. And that's why it's so important to leave no trace.



Destination Lough Derg and Leave No Trace Ireland are asking you to Love This Place

Practising a **Leave No Trace** ethic is very simple: enjoy exploring but make sure you leave no trace of your visit by leaving behind litter, disturbing vegetation or polluting the water. It's that simple.

### The 7 Principles are:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Be Considerate of Others
3. Respect Farm Animals and Wildlife
4. Travel and Camp on Durable Ground
5. Leave What You Find
6. Dispose of Waste Properly
7. Minimise the Effects of Fire





Enjoy the legendary vibe  
of Lough Derg





# Lough Derg



[www.discoverloughderg.ie](http://www.discoverloughderg.ie)

