



Things to do in West Cork

Welcome to Westlodge & to Bantry.

We hope you have an enjoyable and pleasant stay with us. We hope during your stay you can enjoy our beautifully landscaped gardens and wooded walks and the panoramic views of the mountains and Bantry Bay. Here are our suggestions on the many attractions and things to do in West Cork.

Bantry House & Gardens

027-50047

Bantry House is a stately home overlooking Bantry Bay in the south west of Ireland.

It is owned by Egerton & Brigitte Shelswell-White and their children Bantry House is just 10 minute walk from Westlodge.

Golf 027-50579

Bantry Bay Golf Club is 2km from Bantry on the N71 to Glengarriff. Designed by Christy O'Connor Jnr. Regarded as challenging and one of the most scenic in the country. Special Green fee rates available at Westlodge Reception and guaranteed tee off times.

There are 3 more 18-hole courses within a 20-mile radius and 9-hole golf course at Glengarriff and Castletownbere.

Beach

The nearest long stretch of Beach is Barley Cove that is 40-minute drive from Bantry. However, there is no shortage of small-secluded sandy beaches in the Bay region where families can enjoy themselves in almost complete privacy.

Skibbereen Heritage Centre 028-40900

The Great Famine Commemoration Exhibition

This commemorates the tragic period in the 1840s that is known in Irish History as the Great Hunger. Skibbereen was one of the worst affected areas, and the events of the era are depicted using local characters and events.

The West Cork Model Railway Village 023-8833224

Walking into the model village you step back in time and see life as it was in the 1940's. See the old West Cork railway line portrayed in delightful miniature serving the towns. The models and figurines are handmade at the model village to a scale of 1:24.

Inacullen - Garnish Island, Glengarriff, County Cork

Ireland 027-63040

Perhaps the most magical setting a garden could have is to be on an island bathed in the warm waters of the Gulf Stream. This small island of 15 hectares is known to horticulturists all over the world as an island garden of rare beauty. Its centrepiece is an outstanding Italian-style garden designed by Harold Peto, linked by other formal features such as a double-sided herbaceous border and surrounded by a wild garden blending into the wider setting of the exceptional sea and mountain scenery around Glengarriff.

West Cork Sailing Centre.027-60132

Learn to sail, charter a yacht go kayaking or just have fun on the water. With an amazing fleet of boats for all abilities, a purpose built centre and a warm welcome. We have a large fleet of boats to suit all abilities. Different size Dinghies, Keelboats and Catamarans for the young beginners to the advanced sailor. All our courses are Irish Sailing Association or Royal Yachting Association certified.

Beara Outdoor Adventures -- Customised Guided Tours

Offers custom made outdoor activities. Pick one or choose combination of adventures. An experienced guide will exclusively lead you /your family through a fantastic day out. Tel 087 6678618

Cinemax, Cinema, The Quay Bantry 027-55777

Children & Adult Films all week.

Walking

Sheep's Head Way – Choose from Long or Short Loop

Guided Tours Available 027-61052

Short Loop : Drive as far as you can on the peninsula until you reach the Turning Point Car Park ó this is your start and finish point.

A well-signposted footpath then leads you past rocky outcrops and Lough Akeen to reach the lighthouse at the tip of the headland.

The path continues along the northern side of the peninsula, crossing some rough ground underfoot. Care is needed here as sheer cliffs and steep coastal crags dominate this section of the headland.

Soon after you have rounded the cliffs, the short loop diverts across the headland and returns to Turning Point Car Park.

Time - 2 hrs, Distance ó 4km, Grade :Easy

Long Loop: The longer 16km loop walk starts and finishes around 4km west of Kilcrohane Village. This access point allows for a longer stretch along the north coast, passing dazzling inlets, coves, blow holes and sea arches along the way. Next, you'll gently climb to the top of 239m-high Ballyroon Mountain, passing a ruined 17th century signal tower as you go. The summit provides spectacular views over both sides of the peninsula before you gently come down, completing the loop along 3km of narrow country lanes to return to the starting point.

Time ó 5-6 hrs, Distance ó 16km, Grade: Moderate/Difficult

Glengarriff Nature Reserve

The name Glengarriff is derived from the Irish Gleann Gairbh which translates as the rough or rugged glen. The setting of Glengarriff Woods Nature Reserve is spectacular, with the woods nestled in the sheltered glen opening out into Glengarriff Harbour. Above the woods rise the Cahal Mountains, with their dramatic layers of sheer rock.

Glengarriff Woods Nature Reserve covers some 300ha, with the dominant habitats being old oak woodland and young woodland which is regenerating in areas which have been cleared of non-native conifers over the last few years. The woods form one of the best examples of oceanic sessile oak woodland in Ireland, being rated second only in importance to the Killarney Oakwoods.

OTHER Walks

The Beara Way, Gougane Barra, Drimoleague Walking Ways.

Information available at Reception.

Lake Fishing 027-50713

Lough Bofinna is great for the fishing enthusiast with brown and rainbow trout. Licences for fishing can be obtained in the local fish tackle shop and from the Spillane family near the lake.

Canoes .. Slipway Bantry. 027-55623 or 087-9123919

Kayak, Dingy & Canoes are available at the Abbey Slipway during the summer months.

Archaeological Sites

The Area is rich in sites of historical and archaeological interest. The area is dotted with stone circles, alignments and galluns, The Kilnaruane Pillar Stone, The Kealkil Stone Circle, The Ahakista Stone Circle being the more accessible near Bantry.

Mizen Head Visitor Centre 028-35115 or 028-35225

An award winning Maritime Museum and Heritage Attraction, this authentic all-weather experience is a must-see with its spectacular location on high cliffs with swirling Atlantic Ocean tides. From the Car park and Visitor Centre, the Signal Station is a ten minute walk along the path, down the 99 steps and across the Arched Bridge, the Mizen is famous for its wildflowers and sightings of wildlife, dolphins, whales, seals, gannets, kittiwakes, choughs ó the bird migration north-south flight path is just a mile off shore.

West Cork Quad Adventures 086-2536664

Quad trekking provides the best all weather activity for all ages from six upwards. Located in Skibbereen West Cork.

West Cork Garden Trail

A group of very different gardens large and small open for viewing in the beautiful surroundings of West Cork. Garden owners in many of the gardens make themselves available to talk about their garden.

Gougane Barra

History: The name Guágan Barra derives from St. Finbar, who according to tradition, built his monastery on the island here in the 6th century. Guágan was at one time part of the territories of the O'Leary's who lost possession of the land in the plantation that followed the Cromwellian

wars. Subsequently it passed to the Townsend family and ultimately the farming tenants under the Land Acts in the early part of this century. The ruins on the island are not part of St. Finbar's original settlement but were erected around 1700 by Rev. Denis O'Mahony who, following the footsteps of St. Finbar, retired to a life of asceticism here. Because of its isolation, in the days of the Penal Laws people travelled from areas far beyond the bounds of the valley to hear Mass in Guágan Barra. One of the most famous 'Mass Path' was that which led from the Borlin Valley to the west via Gowlane Stream and down into Com Rua by way of the savage cleft of Poll.

Market Day in Bantry

Bantry Market day is every Friday. Meet the locals and enjoy the atmosphere of a real market town. Organic foods and all kinds of everything. Bantry has a great selection of Craft Shops and fashion shops including Quillø Fashion Store.

Finally, when in West Cork, check the other local farmers' market. Over recent years, these markets have been developed in the various West Cork towns and offer a variety of fresh produce, direct from the farms - no air miles involved, simply local producers supplying local customers with the best they can offer.

The Islands of West Cork

Whiddy Island

Whiddy Island lies in beautiful Bantry Bay, just a short ferry crossing from Bantry town making it a popular spot for day trippers. The island's climate, like other parts of South West Cork, is influenced by the Gulf Stream creating a unique ecology and wealth of wildlife. Beautiful red and purple fuchsia is abundant on the island throughout the summer and autumn and the common Butterwort is also found here - one of the few insect eating plants found in Ireland.

It's easy to spend a quiet afternoon rambling Whiddy's fields or bird watching at the island's two lakes.

Ferry Service available from Bantry Pier. Contact 086-8626734

Sherkin Island- Ferry Service 087-9117377

Sherkin Island is one of Ireland's unique offshore islands. After a pleasant 10 minute ferry ride from the village of Baltimore in West Cork, you will find yourself in a totally unspoilt setting offering ideal surroundings for a pleasant walk and some safe sandy beaches for swimming. It has an abundance of flora and fauna that attract many nature lovers and birdwatcher

Bere Island- Ferry Service 027-75009 or 086-2423140

Bere Island is located 2 miles off the South-West coast of Ireland in Bantry Bay, County Cork. To the North there is the rugged and beautiful Beara Peninsula, while to the east and south lies the vast bay, which has played host to some of the world's largest ships. The island faces the open Atlantic to the south and southwest offering spectacular views in all directions. The licensed car/passenger ferry "Ikom K" operates between the "Pontoon" pier near Castletownbere on the Beara Peninsula on the mainland and Lawrence Cove on the island where Rerrin village is located with a Shop, Post Office, Pub, Café/Restaurant, 2 hostels, Marina and Craft Shop.

Cape Clear

Ferry Service from Baltimore- 087-2680760 / 087-2824008 / 028-39153 or 028-39159/086-3465110. Ferry Service from Schull- 028-28278 or 0862379302

CAPE CLEAR, Ireland's southernmost inhabited Gaeltacht island, 3 miles long by 1 mile wide, lies 8 miles off the coast of West Cork. 3 miles west of the island stands the solitary Fastnet Rock. To the northwest stretches the Mizen Head, the mainland's southerly point. Cape Clear's wild romantic scenery, its sparkling harbours, its cliffs and bogs and lake, all contribute to the island's unspoilt charm. Heather, gorse and wild flowers cover the rugged hills. Myriad stonewalls have a patchwork effect on the varied landscape. Most of the 150 inhabitants speak Irish and English. Removed from the hustle and bustle of mainland life, Cape Clear offers relaxation, nature, and peace.

The Ewe Gallery.

Ireland's only interactive sculpture Garden ó in a magical riverside setting with bridges and waterfalls.

The Bamboo Park Glengarriff.027-63007/ 027-63975

The unique exotic garden in one of the most attractive areas of Ireland. Situated in the mild climate of Glengarriff in the southwest. Thirty different species of bamboo surrounded by palms and other tropical plants

Healy Pass /Glanmore Lake & Beara Peninsula

Highly recommended scenic drive across the Beara Peninsula.

Manning's Emporium 027-50456

Enjoy real West Cork hospitality with Laura, Andrew & Val at Mannings. Specialising in local cheeses and the ideal place to enjoy some Wine & Cheese & good Coffee.

Pony Trekking (between Ballydehop & Schull)

Horse/Pony Trekking and trap rides Private Lessons for Adults and Children. Beginners Welcome. Contact 028 37246 0 87 9616969

Future Forest Garden Centre, Kealkil Bantry 027-66176

Future Forests, a nursery and garden centre in West Cork, They stock a huge variety of trees, shrubs, hedging, roses, climbers, and perennials, fruit trees - native and exotic. Prices are very reasonable, visitors welcome and plants are available by mail Order to Ireland and the UK

NTDI Garden Centre Tel 027 51027

Located just opposite the entrance to Bantry Bay Golf Club, this centre has a large selection of shrubs, perennials and exotic plants.

Bantry Paintball .. Tel 085 7694430

Ideal for teenagers and young enthusiastic guests.

Whale Watching Tel 086 1200027 or 028 33357

Whale Watching in West Cork .. The ideal adventure day

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