



carlow garden trail



carlow
garden trail

carlow
through the waters of time



Fáilte Ireland
National Tourism Development Authority

SOUTH EAST IRELAND

introduction by helen dillon

There's a whole lot more to visiting a garden than flowers and horticulture. Some gardens have that special quality of making you feel better. You can't catch this elusive something by looking at glossy garden pictures, you have to actually stand in the garden and breathe the air. I could sit for hours watching sun on water beside the lake at Altamont Gardens. I love looking over the hedge in County Carlow and seeing the rivers, mountains, sleek cows, rich farmland and thinking what a good place it would be to grow plants.



"Gardens where the soul's at ease"

W.B. Yeats

In County Carlow, you will find some gardens with rarities, some with glorious colour displays, some with quiet places to sit and think. You can even find plants for sale, so you can bring a bit of Carlow home with you. Take a temperate climate, a handful of good soil, a glass of raindrops, a bit of warm sun and what do you get? A beautiful garden in County Carlow. Try it.

Premises featured on the front cover left to right: Altamont Gardens, Duckett's Grove Walled Gardens & Pleasure Grounds, Rathwood Home & Garden World, Oak Park Forest Park, Arboretum Lifestyle & Garden Centre.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Dillon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Broadcaster, writer and gardener extraordinaire

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. The Carlow Garden Trail ranges from small to very large gardens, garden centres and forest parks and from old to new, so there is something to stimulate both the novice and experienced gardener. Known for its mild and temperate climate, County Carlow in Ireland's sunny South East is the ideal destination for your gardening trip.



Identifiable road signs make the Carlow Garden Trail an easy-to-follow tour through one of the most beautiful inland counties of Ireland offering a unique insight into the plants and plants people that make each premises so individual. The trail can be driven in a day if so desired but naturally we encourage you to relax and enjoy the remarkable beauty of these gardens, garden centres and forest parks at a more leisurely pace.

tips for driving the carlow garden trail

- The trail can be joined at any gardening attraction and driven in either direction.
- Large map boards are located in the grounds of each participating centre providing further information.
- For ease of reference the brochure is listed in alphabetical order.

how to enjoy the carlow garden trail



carlow
garden trail

Situated in the South East of Ireland, approximately 90kms from the ferry and airports of Dublin, Rosslare and Waterford, Carlow is the ideal location for a gardening break. Its central location also offers the perfect base to explore the bordering counties of Wexford, Kilkenny, Wicklow, Kildare and Laois.



Address: Tullow, Co. Carlow.

Contact: Pauline Dowling/Paul Cutler

t: + 353 (0) 59 9159444 f: + 353 (0) 59 9159510

e: altamontgardens@opw.ie

w: www.heritageireland.ie

or www.carlowgardentrail.com

Facilities: Toilets, outdoor picnic tables, large car and coach park, restricted wheelchair access.

How to find us: Exit the M9 at junction 5 for N80. Continue along the N80 (in direction of Wexford) through the village of Ballon and the N80/N81 junction. Continue for 2km, turn left at the next cross road junction signed Altamont Gardens. Alternatively, visitors travelling directly from Carlow town may follow the N80 Wexford/Rosslare road and continue as above.

Open: January: 9.00am – 4.00pm, Mon – Thurs

9.00am – 3.30pm Fri. Closed weekends.

February: 9.00am – 4.00pm, 7 days per week

March: 9.00am – 5.00pm, 7 days per week

April: 9.00am – 6.00pm, 7 days per week

May – August: 9.00am – 7.30pm, 7 days per week

September: 9.00am – 6.30pm, 7 days per week

October: 9.00am – 5.30pm, 7 days per week

Nov – Dec: 9.00am – 4.00pm, Mon – Thurs.

9.00am – 3.30pm, Friday. Closed weekends.

Check for Christmas opening times.

Admission fee applies to groups only.

altamont gardens

Widely respected as the jewel in Ireland's gardening crown, Altamont Gardens are an enchanting blend of formal and informal gardens with riverside walks covering over 40 acres (16 hectares). The estate gains much of its character from the many mature trees, both natives in the avenues and woodland areas, and exotic specimens throughout the gardens including *Cedrus deodara* (Deodar Cedar), *Taxodium distichum* (Swamp Cypress), *Quercus rubra* (Red Oak) and *Sequoiadendron giganteum* (Giant Redwood). Lawns bisected by sculpted yews slope down to a lake surrounded by rare trees and rhododendrons and lead in turn to a very different garden featuring exotic shrubs and trees. A fascinating walk through the Arboretum, Bog Garden and Ice Age Glen with its canopy of ancient oaks and huge stone outcrops leads the visitor to the River Slaney.

The original Victorian layout was enhanced by Fielding Leckey Watson (and later by his daughter Corona North), following his purchase of Altamont in 1924. Corona travelled extensively in her search for plants, which continue to flourish throughout the gardens, including *Cornus kousa 'chinensis'* and *Liriodendron tulipifera* (Tulip Tree). When Corona North, who lovingly cared for the gardens for over 50 years died in 1999, the gardens were left to the State at her request. Ongoing restoration and maintenance continues under the careful stewardship of the Office of Public Works.

Altamont is a great experience at any time of year starting in spring with the wonderful snowdrop collection, one of the largest in Ireland and moving on to daffodils and other spring bulbs such as *Fritillaria meleagris* (Snake's Head Fritillary) and *Muscari armeniacum* (Grape hyacinths). Rhododendrons, azaleas and later on the rose collection is in full bloom in mid-summer, followed by contrasting autumnal colours and the beautiful silhouettes of the mighty trees in mid-winter.

"It seems from the peaceful atmosphere of the surrounding garden that Altamont is a much-loved place."

Helen Dillon, Ireland of the Welcomes 1988



altamont plant sales

the walled garden at altamont

An unmissable highlight of a visit to Altamont Gardens is the Walled Garden situated within the grounds of the estate and run privately by gardener and nurseryman Robert Miller. The area consists of the Corona North Commemorative Border and Altamont Plant Sales and Nursery. The Corona North Commemorative Border took over a year to design, build and plant, and was opened in 2000 to honour Altamont's late owner, Corona North. Many of the plants in the border were donated by friends of Corona and fellow great Irish gardeners. These donated plants and thousands of others grown at Robert Miller and then-business partner Assumpta Broomfield's nursery make up one of the largest borders of its kind in the country, and tell a story of Irish horticulture woven into a seamless living tapestry. A visit is a must for any seasoned or novice gardener looking for inspiration or simple enjoyment.

Altamont Plant Sales has not only grown in size in the last few years, but more so in reputation as a place to acquire seriously good garden plants. Altamont Plant Sales has always been renowned for its extensive and exclusive range of herbaceous perennials—many of which can only be found at Altamont. But Altamont Plant Sales can also now boast of having one of the largest collections of old shrub roses available for sale to the gardening public year round. If trees and shrubs are more your thing, don't despair. Rare oaks, maples, cherry blossoms, dogwoods, magnolias, beech and smaller flowering trees and shrubs suitable for every-sized garden are also available throughout the year.

A highlight of the Irish gardening calendar is Snowdrop Week, hosted at Altamont every February by the O.P.W. This is an opportunity to marvel at the vast varieties of snowdrops in bloom throughout the garden, and also to acquire several types to start or add to your own collection, along with a selection of hellebores second to none. Hundreds of complementary flowering plants are also available throughout the spring. Altamont Plant Sales is exactly as the name suggests: plants for sale—high-quality plants grown and cared for with expertise and knowledge. Robert Miller of Altamont Plant Sales is also available for consultancy work for new and mature gardens.



Address: Altamont Gardens, Tullow, Co. Carlow.

Contact: Robert Miller

t: + 353 (0) 87 9822135

e: altamontplants@hotmail.com

w: www.carlowgardentrail.com

How to find us: In the grounds of Altamont Gardens (for directions see previous page).

Open: January – November 7 days per week
10.00am – 6.00pm weekdays, 11.00am – 6.00pm weekends. December, 10.00am – 6.00pm weekdays, closed weekends.



arboretum lifestyle & garden centre

Commitment to excellent customer service, quality products, unbeatable choice and value for money has earned the Arboretum Lifestyle & Garden Centre the coveted title of Bord Bia Garden Centre of the Year and Best Customer Service Award on numerous occasions.

Arboretum Lifestyle & Garden Centre is far more than a place for the gardening enthusiast. It's an entire shopping experience; a place to savour the myriad of interesting items dotted throughout the store. Spacious and well laid out, the centre guides visitors through elegant displays of garden furnishings, pot plants, outdoor plants, an extensive gifts section, hand crafted furniture and lots more. An entire day can be devoted to the visit, wandering through the fantastic range of items available, seeking expert advice from friendly staff or enjoying a delicious meal or cup of coffee in the tranquil setting of Mulberry's Restaurant. Year round the centre is a delight to visit reflecting the changing seasons of the gardener's world. In winter, the Arboretum becomes a Christmas wonderland with a multitude of decorations and gift ideas while in spring and summer brilliant colours burst from every area of the store.

Address: Kilkenny Road, Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow.
t: + 353 (0) 59 9721558 f:+ 353 (0) 59 9721642
e: info@arboretum.ie w: www.arboretum.ie

Facilities: Toilets, large car and coach park, wheelchair accessible, restaurant with wine licence. Pet shop, conference centre, mini associated retail park.

How to find us: Continue along the M9 Carlow Bypass and along the N9 towards Waterford. The Arboretum Lifestyle & Garden Centre is located immediately off the N9 at Leighlinbridge. Alternatively visitors travelling directly from Carlow town may follow the R448 until it joins the N9 Carlow – Waterford road. Directions from this point as per previous.

Open: Monday – Saturday 9.00am – 6.00pm
Late opening Thursdays until 8.00pm
Sunday 11.00am – 6.00pm
Bank Holidays 9.00am – 6.00pm

"A delightful place to visit, it excels in terms of its strong customer focus, professional staff, top quality plants and excellent merchandising."

Judging panel from An Bord Bia on winning the Garden Centre of the Year Award

A new addition to the Arboretum is the Edinburgh Woolen Mills providing the finest woolen and cashmere products for ladies and gentlemen. The Pets and Aquatics Shop offers a variety of tropical fish, rabbits and hamsters and food, toys and treats for animals.

Their comprehensive website www.arboretum.ie features a whole range of gardening tips from Rachel Doyle, proprietor and *Sunday Independent* gardening columnist.



Ireland's Premier
5 Star Garden Centre



arboretum inspirational gardens

Arboretum Lifestyle and Garden Centre has created a new and exciting display garden to inspire the modern day customer. Helping visitors to create their own dreams while showing them that gardening is both stylish and fun, this new showpiece allows people to see that gardening can be enjoyed in any busy lifestyle. The concept behind this design was to create a garden that is easy to care for, demands low maintenance and delivers endless enjoyment.



Designed to inspire visitors on planting schemes and solutions, the garden offers endless ideas that can be easily recreated in gardeners' own homes. Gardening today is closely related to fashion and trends and keeping this in mind we have used modern materials while at the same time not forgetting that plants are the core element of any good garden design. In creating the new display garden we realised that children are an integral part of design regarding safety and fun. Keeping this in mind the team at Arboretum included a children's maze which will be a maximum height of 1metre.

This is located beside our new terraced area of Mulberry's Restaurant. The reason behind this is that children can play while parents enjoy some of Mulberry's fine food. Families can also pay a visit to our fun mud hut or visit the friendly koi who live in the pond. A visit to the garden is a treat for the amateur or the enthusiast who will enjoy seeing the themed planting, use of colour, texture and form.



Address: Arboretum Lifestyle & Garden Centre,
Kilkenny Road, Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow.

t: + 353 (0) 59 9721558

f: + 353 (0) 59 9721642

e: info@arboretum.ie

w: www.arboretum.ie

Facilities: Toilets, large car and coach park,
wheelchair accessible, restaurant with wine
licence. Pet shop, conference centre, mini
associated retail park.

How to find us: As per previous page.

Open: Monday – Saturday 9.00am – 6.00pm

Late opening Thursdays until 8.00pm

Sunday 11.00am – 6.00pm

Bank Holidays 9.00am – 6.00pm Free admission



ashlawn garden centre

Conveniently situated close to the town of Bagenalstown in an open country setting, Ashlawn Garden Centre is a family run business where excellent service and advice is on hand in a friendly and informative manner. Our plants are our pride and joy and there is something for everyone here, catering for the expert gardener to the complete novice with specially selected ranges to suit different needs and budgets.



Address: Donore, Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow.

Contact: Jim/Trish Fisher

t: + 353 (0) 59 9721175

f: + 353 (0) 59 9721175

e: ashlawngardencentre@eircom.net

w: www.carlowgardentrail.com

Facilities: Toilets, car park, wheelchair accessible.

How to find us: Situated 3km outside Bagenalstown off the Borris road (R705). Take the first turn to the left after the railway bridge in Bagenalstown. Ashlawn Garden Centre is 2km on the left hand side of the road.

Open: Monday – Saturday 9.30am – 6.00pm

Sundays & Bank Holidays 2.00pm – 6.00pm

Ashlawn Garden Centre offers a wide range of healthy trees, shrubs, roses and perennials at outstandingly good value while the new 3,000 square foot shop is packed with a full range of sprays, sprayers, terracotta and glazed pots, tools, pet accessories, fountains, lights and bird baths, seasonal bulbs and seeds. A selection of giftware, oak barrels and decorative stone in bulk and bags is always available.

“A gardener’s pictures are never quite complete; that is their joy.”

The Reader’s Digest to Creative Gardening 1986

delta sensory gardens & garden centre

Delta Sensory Gardens officially opened in May 2007, consist of 14 interconnecting gardens with a mix of formal and informal landscaping. The award winning gardens have a therapeutic focus and benefit people of all abilities.



Visitors can wander through the various gardens at their own pace or as a group. Enjoy a guided tour and delight all your senses, with splashing fountains, perfumed plants, colourful shrubs and plants for all seasons, reflect on sculptures, enjoy the delightful sounds of wildlife and much more.

After your tour you may wish to visit our restaurant for a light lunch or a snack with tea or coffee (group bookings essential). You can also check out the many seasonal offers in our garden sales area, where we stock a wide variety of bedding plants, bulbs and a selection of shrubs. Our friendly staff can give you expert advice and help with any specific requirements.

Delta Centre holds many events through the year including: Daffodil Week, Summer Sale, Floral Festival, Christmas Lights Display and Craft Fair. A large selection of arts and crafts is available at the different events many of which are hand made at Delta.

'A rare and exquisite gem' Judges in National Co-operation Pride of Place 2007



Address: Strawhall Estate, Carlow.

Contact: Eileen Brophy

t: + 353 (0) 59 9143527 f: + 353 (0) 59 9130280
e: info@deltacentre.org w: www.deltacentre.org

Facilities: Car park, toilets, wheelchair accessible, restaurant.

How to find us: Strawhall Estate is located off Cannery Road, the road which serves Dr. Cullen Park G.A.A. Grounds, on the outskirts of Carlow town close to the Athy Road roundabout. Follow brown tourist signs.

Open: Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm;
Weekends & Public Holidays 11.00am to 5.30pm
Closed on weekends January & February.

Admission fee applies.



Copyright Finola Reid

duckett's grove walled gardens & pleasure grounds



Duckett's Grove, the 18th, 19th and early 20th century home of the Duckett family, was formerly at the centre of a 12,000 acre estate that has dominated the Carlow landscape for over 300 years. In September 2005 during Heritage Week, Carlow County Council acquired Duckett's Grove and commenced the restoration of two inter-connecting walled gardens.

Even in ruin, the surviving towers and turrets of Duckett's Grove form a romantic profile making it one of the most photogenic historic buildings in the country.

Address: Duckett's Grove, Carlow.

Contact: Carlow Tourist Office

t: + 353 (0) 59 9131554

f: + 353 (0) 59 9170776

e: carlowtouristoffice@failteireland.ie

w: www.carlowgardentrail.com

Facilities: Toilet facilities, car parking, wheelchair access. Tea room each Sunday from 2.00pm – 5.00pm June – end October. Check in advance with 059 9161130 before arrival. Guide dogs only allowed.

How to find us: From Castledermot take the R418 towards Tullow for 6 km and turn right at the signed junction. From Carlow take the R726 Hacketstown Road for 10 km to Killerig Cross Roads. Turn left at this junction onto the R418 for 2.5 km, turn left again at the signed junction.

Open: End March – end Sept daily 8.00am – 9.00pm;
rest of year daily 8.00am – 4.00pm
Free admission

The first phase of the revival of two old walled gardens has now been completed, the old paths revealed and the beds and borders reinstated. Stylistically the new planting schemes echo the past yet reflect changing fashions, utilising plants and planting patterns that may have evolved over time.

The Upper Walled Garden, hedged with boxwood, is planted with historical varieties of shrub roses, a collection of Chinese and Japanese peonies, a great variety of hardy and tender perennials and choice flowering shrubs including *Echium*, *Watsonia*, *Acanthus*, *Jovellana*, *Daphniphyllum*, *Acradenia*, *Arbutus*, *Cornus*, *Iris*, *Eryngium*, *Beschorneria*, *Euporbia*, and to really test the microclimate of the gardens, some ornamental bananas.

The Lower Walled Garden, once the site of the old orchard, contains a variety of fruits, including figs and historical varieties of Irish apples amongst others. The borders also contain a variety of shrubs and perennials all echoing the past history of the gardens and people associated with Duckett's Grove.

Restored paths and the repaired sunken stone bridge plus plantings of oak, lime, hazel, spindle and laurel rekindle the spirit of the Georgian Pleasure Grounds.

"Spectemur agendo – Let us be judged by our actions". Duckett Family Motto

hardymount gardens

One of the largest Spanish chestnuts in the country greets you on arrival to 2.5 acres of lawns and shrubs surrounded by magnificent beech and oak trees. A wonderful walled garden behind the house contains many unusual plants and flowers in the herbaceous border – lilac coloured *Erysimum*, yellow helianthus, beds of old roses, downy variegated mint, mimosa, blue agapanthus, California tree poppies, Chinese foxgloves and much, much more. The grass paths take you past the pond with lilies and fish to espaliered apple trees, *Lobelia tupa*, a pergola clothed with wisteria and underplanted with hollyhocks and foxgloves and on to a vegetable garden. A Summer House at the end of the garden in a sheltered corner provides a quiet area for rest and relaxation. A truly amazing walled garden worth knowing because of its owner and her dedication to gardening.



“Sheila Reeves-Smyth puts her work and effort into a garden that will give pleasure for the length of the summer and into autumn. Trellis, espaliered apples and the wisteria tunnel all create a pleasing division of the space and structure in the walled garden. Each little area feels private and secluded. But the overall picture does not look contrived or “designed”. Hardymount is well cared for but not overly manicured, a relaxed country garden.”

O’ Brien Guide to Irish Gardens by Shirley Lanigan 2001

Address: Tullow, Co. Carlow.

Contact: Sheila Reeves-Smyth

t: + 353 (0) 59 9151769

www.carlowgardentrail.com

Facilities: Wheelchair accessible.

How to find us: From Dublin - through the town of Tullow onto the Bunclody road N81. Turn right after the Statoil petrol station, on the outskirts of the town. Turn right at next cross roads – the gardens are 550 metres on the right hand side.

Open: Sundays 2.00pm – 6.00pm May – August.
Other times by appointment. Admission fee applies.
Groups very welcome.



herb gardens at kilgraney house

Kilgraney takes its name from the Irish 'cill gréine' which means 'sunny hill' or 'sunny wood'. These wooded and secluded grounds overlook the tranquil Barrow valley and are situated halfway between Carlow town and Kilkenny City.

Consisting of a series of interconnecting herbal gardens there is a large kitchen garden, a tea walk, a medicinal herb courtyard, a mediaeval monastic herb garden and a garden of aromatic and fragrant herbs.

The enclosed kitchen garden supplies the guesthouse with fruit, vegetables and herbs and has been run on organic lines for almost ten years. It consists of gravel paths and eleven raised timber beds of varying sizes grouped to form a modern rectangular 'potager'. Here you will find unusual leafy plants such as mibuna, mizuna and komatsuna amongst more traditional salad varieties. Next to the kitchen garden is the tea walk, a short gravel path lined on one side with plants suitable for infusions and herbal teas.

The medicinal garden, set in a granite courtyard, consists of nine raised beds in Irish oak timber. Each bed is planted with herbs suitable for treating a particular part of the body. In a lower courtyard you will find an aromatic garden planted with herbs for fragrance and also for their usefulness in cosmetic preparations. In an adjoining courtyard there is a modern interpretation of a medieval monastic herb garden with four oak raised beds surrounded on two sides by an oak timber cloister. Finally, a circular cosmic garden helps to explain and facilitate our understanding of the ancient belief that there is a connection between people, plants, planets and constellations.

We regret that the main house is not open to garden visitors.

"Herbs are big here; in fact, Kilgraney does wonders for one's karma".

Room for Romance, the ultimate guide to romantic hotels.

Address: Borris Road, Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow.

Contact: Bryan Leech/Martin Marley
t: + 353 (0) 59 9775283 f: + 353 (0) 59 9775595
e: info@kilgraneyhouse.com
w: www.kilgraneyhouse.com

Facilities: Car park (unsuitable for coaches), toilets, restricted access for wheelchairs. Accommodation with evening meal available. Unsuitable for children, no dogs allowed.

How to find us: Situated just off the R705, Kilgraney is halfway between Bagenalstown (Muine Bheag) and Borris.

Open: May – September, Thursday to Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays 2.00pm – 5.00pm. Admission charge applies.

huntington castle gardens

These gardens were mainly laid out in the 17th century by the Esmondés who built Huntington Castle in 1625. This includes the French limes on the Avenue, the “parterre” or lawns to the side of the house, the fish ponds on either side of the centre walk through the wilderness and the majority of Yew trees which comprise the Yew Walk.



Larger plantings have resulted in Huntington possessing a number of great Irish trees, including four varieties of hickory, a cut leaved oak, Siberian crab and buckeye chestnut.

A lake at the bottom of the wilderness was built for ornamental purposes but next to it is one of the earliest water turbine houses in Ireland, providing Huntington with its own electricity as early as 1888. Both the lake and turbine house are to be restored in the near future. The River Derry – also being the boundary line between Counties Wexford and Carlow – flows along the bottom of the wilderness, providing a pleasant setting for woodland walks.

“The first thing that strikes you about Huntington, apart from the derelict beauty which hangs over most of the ascendancy buildings, are the palm trees. Several tall specimens suddenly appear at the end of the long yew tree avenue.”

Mal Rogers, Aer Lingus Cara Magazine August 2005.



Address: Clonegal village, Co. Carlow.

Contact: Moira Robertson

t: + 353 (0) 53 9377552

f: + 353 (0) 53 9377160

e: genova@reachbroadband.com

w: www.carlowgardentrail.com

Facilities: Car park, toilets, restricted access for wheelchairs. Guided tours of Huntington Castle available. Craft shop stocking unusual craft items.

How to find us: In the village of Clonegal which is accessible off the N80 Ballon – Bunclody road or via Tullow.

Open: June – August daily 2.00pm – 6.00pm
Admission charge applies.



leighlinbridge – the garden village

The Leighlinbridge district is rich in history, favoured with fertile land and enhanced by the River Barrow which meanders slowly through the village. The foundation for its beauty lies directly with the residents who demonstrate a sense of pride and work tirelessly to preserve and enhance this unique area. This pride is evident by a range of gardens, built and designed by the local community to commemorate various aspects of village life over the years.

The Millennium Garden consists of seven small individual gardens, each with its own theme represented by trees, shrubs and stones. Using materials indigenous to the local area, the garden tells the story of life through a series of themes including peace and tranquillity, happiness, friendship, reconciliation, hope, harmony and eternity.

The Vivaldi Garden is based on Vivaldi's musical concerto *The Four Seasons* and comprises four formal gardens, each depicting a season of the year. To create a formal effect each rectangle is lined with *Buxus sempervirens* (Boxwood) and formed into triangles with lavender while each season is represented by specific planting.

The Garden of Remembrance straddling the River Barrow commemorates important occasions in the history of the village including the visit of the Canadian Prime Minister, Brian Mulrooney, a World War 1 Memorial and the Entente Florale Gold Medal Award. A number of commemorative trees have been planted together with ballerina roses and shrubs.

The Sculpture Garden is dedicated to three of Leighlinbridge's most famous sons – Cardinal Patrick Francis Moran – Australia's first Cardinal, John Tyndall, the mountaineer and scientist who developed the light pipe, the forerunner to fibre optics and Captain Myles Keogh, second in command to General Custer who lost his life at the Battle of the Little Big Horn in 1876 at the hands of the Sioux.



"It is a place of infinite tranquillity and restfulness, an inspired use of a simple setting in this village of special charm." Excerpt from the judging committee of the Barrow Awards Scheme on Leighlinbridge

Gold medal winner in the European Entente Florale competition 2001, Gold Medal Winner in Tidy Towns 2004 – 2007 inclusive, winner of Carlow's inaugural Pride of Place Initiative 2004 and prize winner in the National Pride of Place Initiative 2003, overall winner in the Barrow Awards 2001 & 2003, Carlow's Floral Pride winner on a number of occasions.

Address: Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow.

Contact: Mary Meaney, Secretary,
Leighlinbridge Improvement Group
t: + 353 (0) 86 6027751
w: www.carlowgardentrail.com

Facilities: Award winning Arboretum Lifestyle & Garden Centre, restaurant, hotel, pubs, castle, historic buildings, angling, walking routes, picnic site.

How to find us: Continue along the M9 Carlow Bypass and along the N9 towards Waterford. Leighlinbridge is clearly signposted off the N9.

Open: During daylight hours.

morgan's garden centre

Based on the outskirts of Carlow town, Morgan's Garden Centre is a family run business, which has developed and grown rapidly in recent years to become recognised as a leading garden centre. This award winning centre features a well-stocked shop and extensive covered plant sales area for summer bedding and seasonal plants, most of which are grown in the adjoining area. All trees, shrubs, roses and heathers are sourced from leading Irish nurseries ensuring high quality plants.



Visitors are guaranteed something for every season – bedding and patio plants for spring and summer, pottery, stoneware and water features with bulbs, hedging and trees for autumn.

Advice is provided by trained and experienced staff who will give ideas and tips for your garden and answer all your gardening queries. Service is guaranteed to be friendly, helpful and efficient.

“Quality, Service, Good Value”



Address: [Mortarstown, Green Road, Carlow.](#)

Contact: Liam/Carmel Morgan
t: + 353 (0) 59 9143092 f: + 353 (0) 59 9143179
e: morgansgc@eircom.net
w: www.carlowgardentrail.com

Facilities: Car park, toilet, wheelchair accessible.

How to find us: Morgan's Garden Centre is located on the outskirts of Carlow town, just off the R448 (in direction of Kilkenny). Take the first turn to the left after Carlow Institute of Technology (well signposted).

Open: Monday – Saturday 9.30am – 6.00pm
Sunday 2.00pm – 6.00pm
Bank Holidays 10.00am – 6.00pm



oak park forest park

There are few locations which could rival the beauty and tranquility of Oak Park Forest Park. Ideal for leisurely strolls and walks, a visit here is a relaxing and pleasurable experience and a must for any visitor to Co. Carlow. Colour coded circular walkways of varying lengths with excellent accessible surfaces and easy gradients make a visit here an enjoyable experience for young and old alike.



Address: Oak Park, Carlow.

Contact: Carlow Tourist Office, College Street, Carlow.

t: + 353 (0) 59 9131554

e: carlowtouristoffice@failteireland.ie

w: www.carlowgardentrail.com

Facilities: Wheelchair accessible toilets, large car park, outdoor picnic tables. Wheelchair accessible walkways and bird watch area.

How to find us: At Castledermot take the R448 in the direction of Carlow. Take the first right after Toughers Restaurant (on the outskirts of Carlow town). Take a left at the next junction. Clearly signposted. Access also possible off Dr. Cullen Park Road on the outskirts of Carlow town.

Open: End March – end Sept daily 8.00am – 9.00pm, rest of year daily from 8.00am – 4.00pm. Check for Christmas opening times.

The park is a mature, mixed species woodland of over 120 acres with a predominance of beech, oak, scots pine, silver fir, larch and sycamore. The proximity of the walkways to the extensive collection of ferns, mosses and woodland flora provides the visitor with an ideal opportunity to interact with nature. Boasting a rich diversity of wildlife, the lakes and their surrounds provide a habitat for swans and ducks, while the islands shelter many wild and game birds. The Woodland Walks have been laid out to encompass the broadest range of natural features. Extending over 4 kilometres they include Butlers Wood Loop (700 metres), the Lake Path (800 metres), Fox Covert Track (1100 metres) and Sally Island Trail (1700 metres). All the walks are wheelchair accessible.

Situated on the outskirts of Carlow town, the park is an oasis of tranquility and a popular destination for walking and educational visits. The park also features a picnic area, informal leisure areas and seating at regular intervals.

rathvilly garden centre

Rathvilly Garden Centre is a family run business, operated by Dermot and Caroline Byrne who pride themselves on offering a comprehensive range of home grown bedding plants and shrubs for the gardening enthusiast.

Their commitment and high quality standards earned them the title of Best New Entry 2006 in the Bord Bia Garden Centre Quality Awards.



This country garden centre is set on 5 acres (2 hectares) with a 1 acre (.5 hectare) amenity garden with picnic and children's play area. A large covered plant area also includes a fine gift shop which stocks pottery, candles, houseware, glassware and innovative gift ideas. Trees and shrubs, heathers and roses are sourced in Ireland to ensure top quality. A recent addition to the garden centre is a large patio centre which caters for all types of patios. The garden centre features a range of bulbs, seeds, garden tools and a large selection of trees, shrubs, container pots, fruit trees, patio slabs, outdoor pots, moss peat, trellis and fencing. Trained and experienced staff will give advice on all gardening queries to the extent of visiting your garden and planning where everything should go.

Rathvilly Garden Centre now features the Blueberry Café, serving homemade soups, brown bread and scones, hot food, an assortment of homemade desserts and a delicious range of coffees, lattes, hot chocolate, cappuccinos and teas. Open daily 9.00am – 5.30pm.



Address: Baltinglass Road, Rathvilly, Co. Carlow.

Contact: Dermot and Caroline Byrne

t: 059 9161594 or 087 8344582

f: 059 9161296

w: www.carlowgardentrail.com

Facilities: Wheelchair accessible, toilet (wheelchair), café and picnic tables.

How to find us: 3.5km from Rathvilly and 6km from Baltinglass on the Rathvilly – Baltinglass N81 road. Well signposted.

Open: Monday – Saturday 9.00am – 6.00pm

Sunday 11.30am – 6.00pm

Bank Holidays 10.00 am – 6.00pm



rathwood home and garden world

Rathwood is simply a treasure chest of interesting and unusual ideas, displayed in room by room style, so that you can add their extra special touch to your home or garden. This multi award winning, exclusive, family owned centre incorporates a mediterranean style garden centre and courtyard, a fashionable gift and garden shop, elite furniture and interiors shop and bright busy restaurant.



Address: Rath, Tullow, Co. Carlow.

Contact: Trish Keogh

t: + 353 (0) 59 9156285 f: + 353 (0) 59 9156239

e: info@rathwood.com w: www.rathwood.com

Facilities: Multi-award winning exclusive centre consisting of gift & garden shop, furniture & interiors shop, exclusive exhibition house, walled garden centre, excellent restaurant, train rides, children's outdoor play garden, woodland walks, large coach and car park, toilets, wheelchair access, tourist information point, ladies clothes, shoe and accessory shop, stone landscaping, log cabins, children's play centres.

How to find us: 10 km from Altamont Gardens or take the R725 Tullow to Shillelagh Road. Off the N9, N11 or N81 to Tullow.

Open: Monday – Saturday (incl. Bank Holidays)
9.30am – 6.00pm, Sundays 11.00am – 6.00pm

Rathwood retails an inspiring array of stunning furniture, gifts, accessories, plants and much more. Customers from the green fingered to the fledgling gardener or new home owner are guaranteed expert advice and friendly assistance.

Lunch at Rathwood's Restaurant is pivotal to the Rathwood shopping experience, where customers can relax and enjoy impressive main courses and a delicious selection of home baking. A ride on the Rathwood Express train, woodland walk, visit to the animal park or Christmas wonderland makes Rathwood a joy to visit at any time of the year. Make a day out of your trip and include a lunch stop at Rathwood with your visit to Altamont Gardens.

"A family run enterprise, Rathwood is a tribute to pure entrepreneurship, imagination and vision at its very best. Retail Times decided on a recent visit that the ideal destination with something for everyone really does exist. Their fresh and unique approach has led to this award winning and highly acclaimed world class visitor attraction in the South East."

Retail Excellence Times, May 2009



rath wood forest walks

A local partnership between Coillte, the Forest Service, Rath Community Group and Rathwood Home & Garden World, under a NeighbourWood Scheme, has resulted in serene, tranquil woodland walks, open to the public at Rath. The Forest Walks, extending over 4 kilometres, have been carefully planned to include a short leisurely wheelchair accessible walk to the Lake and a longer looped 'Molloy Walk'. Joe Molloy was a local historian and farmer, who was involved in the first planting of the forest over half a century ago.



This working forest is a valuable and rewarding educational tool, given the vast ecological resources of flora, wildlife and tree species contained within its 185 acre boundaries. Rath Wood offers a sanctuary for many mammals, birds and insect species. Expect to see deer, rabbits, mink, ducks, donkeys, foxes, pheasants and dragonflies among others. The forest contains a great variety of tree species including beech, oak, sitka spruce, norway spruce, birch, douglas fir and alder.

Take a pleasant stroll across the natural beauty of Rath Wood and discover a landscape rich in geology, archaeology and wild life. The historical feature of Rathgall Hillfort which dates back to 800B.C. is located nearby.

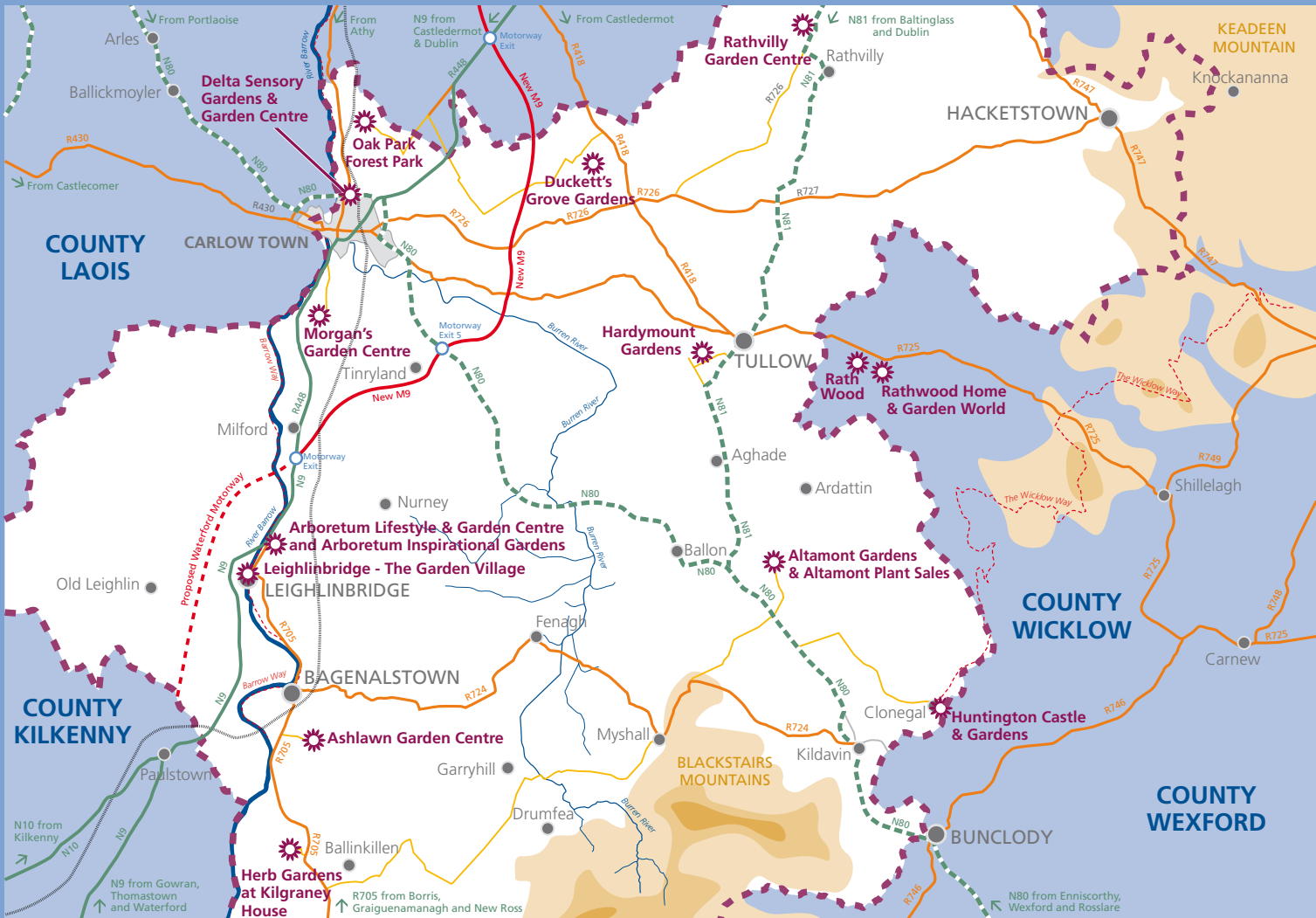


Address: Rath, Tullow, Co. Carlow.
(beside Rathwood Home & Garden World)

Facilities: Wheelchair accessible path to lake, seating at regular intervals. Woodland map guide, information board, car park located at Rathwood Home & Garden World beside the forest. Toilets and restaurant available at Rathwood Home & Garden World.

How to find us: For directions see previous page

Car park open: Monday – Saturday (incl. Bank Holidays) 9.30am – 6.00pm, Sundays 11.00am – 6.00pm. Coillte operates an open door policy.





carlow floral festival trail



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www.carlowfloralfestival.com

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Carlow Farmers' Market



Carlow Farmers' Market is a food-based market that has proven hugely popular as customers embrace the wide variety of fresh fruit, vegetables, meats, juices and home baking on offer here.

The market is held each Saturday morning from 9.00am – 2.00pm at the Potato Market and Liberty Tree in the centre of Carlow town, a well designed space, set in bright and modern surroundings. The market provides an outlet for local farm based food, while also allowing visitors and locals the opportunity to meet local farmers and growers and purchase top quality Carlow foods in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

Foodstuffs available at the market include organic and conventional meats and vegetables while hand crafted chocolates, cheeses, fish, fruit in season, juices, jams, chutneys, free range eggs, crepes, beverages, ethnic foods, a huge array of home baking and cottage garden plants and flowers are also on sale.

Tel: 087 273 8061

www.carlowfarmersmarket.com

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- Family functions and parties.
- Sunday lunch a speciality - please book.
- Altamont Gardens 1km.

MARY JORDAN Kilbride Cross, Ballon, Co. Carlow.

Tel/Fax: +353 (0) 59 9159939

After Hours: +353 (0) 59 9159136

Email: theforgekilbride@eircom.net



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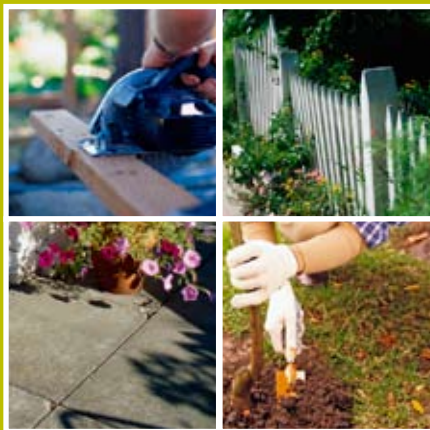


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Rosa Blessings, Altamont Gardens, Tullow, Co. Carlow



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www.carlowgardentrail.com



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

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

Carlow Tourist Office, College Street, Carlow

t: + 353 (0) 59 9131554 f: + 353 (0) 59 9170776 e: carlowtouristoffice@failteireland.ie

or Carlow Tourism, The Foresters' Hall, College Street, Carlow

t: + 353 (0) 59 9130411 f: + 353 (0) 59 9130477 e: info@carlowtourism.com w: www.carlowtourism.com

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

For ease of reference the brochure is listed in alphabetical order.

Premises featured above left to right: Delta Sensory Gardens, Leighlinbridge – the Garden Village,
 Rathvilly Garden Centre, Hardymount Gardens, Ashlawn Garden Centre.

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Carlow County
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An Roinn Gnóthaí Poblail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta
 Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs



Fáilte Ireland
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