

## HERITAGE ITINERARY

# Rooted in Tradition

### Highlights

Explore the medieval chambers in the ancient keep of Carrickfergus Castle.

Enjoy a traditional Irish beverage in the oldest thatched pub in Ireland.

Capture an image like no other at Cranny Falls.

### Travel time

If you were to visit all the stops on this itinerary, you'd be driving for a total of:

DAY ONE - 50 MINS

DAY TWO - 45 MINS

This land has a story to tell. A historic tale passed down through generations, through artefacts and ruins, through folklore and ancient writings. Where etchings of the past reveal a deeper understanding. It's a place for wandering through ancient castles, dandering through sleepy Georgian villages, hiking to cascading waterfalls and making tracks of your own on a steam train experience. A place to contemplate those who shaped this unique corner of Ireland.

This is an experience that's rooted in tradition and we want to share it with you. Join us for two days of exploration and fun on this handy two-day itinerary.

## Day 1

### CARRICKFERGUS CASTLE

Step inside one of Northern Ireland's best-preserved Medieval structures. If the walls in this historic castle could talk they would tell the tales of ancient kings, cross country invasions, great betrayals and the infamous Siege of Carrickfergus. At different times over the centuries, this mighty fortress has withstood attacks from Scottish, Gaelic Irish and French armies. Walk the cobblestones through medieval chambers, an ancient keep and take in the panoramic views of the Belfast Lough from the looking tower. As you go, pay homage to the great John de Courcy who had the foresight to build this unrivalled piece of Irish history.

ALLOW  
2 HOURS





### CARRICKFERGUS MUSEUM

Take a short walk from the castle, past the site of the last witchcraft trial in Ireland, to find the impressive Carrickfergus Museum. In this hands-on experience, you can learn why Carrickfergus is the most archaeologically explored town in Northern Ireland and find out more about the people who left their mark on this historic place. As if this isn't enough, you also have the opportunity to add your own stories, photographs or documents into the collection - now that is pretty special.

ALLOW  
1 HOUR



### OLD TOWN WALLS & ST NICHOLAS' CHURCH

Just a short walk ahead you will find the Old Town Walls of Carrickfergus. Here stands the remains of the stone walls that once spanned over 1159 metres in length and 6 metres in height. Sir Arthur Chichester built these walls in the 1600s to protect the people of Carrickfergus and his treasured castle. Despite many breaches, it still remains one of the best preserved in Ireland. If you like Carrickfergus Castle, you should check out another great structure built by John de Courcy – St Nicholas' Church. Built in the 12th century, the church's fabric is beautifully interwoven with the symbolism and history of Carrickfergus.

ALLOW  
1 HOUR



### ANDREW JACKSON COTTAGE & US RANGERS CENTRE

Less than a mile drive from Carrickfergus Town Centre is a traditionally thatched Ulster-Scots farmhouse. This character-filled building is a replica of the 1750s home where the parents of the seventh US President, Andrew Jackson once lived. The inside of the house has been restored to its original state including an open fire, wattle canopy and hanging crane. It's a modest home, fit for a president. A small walk from the cottage is the US Rangers Centre, a museum to commemorate the first battalion of the American Army that was set up in Carrickfergus in 1942. Have a walk around and look at the documents, uniforms and memorabilia left by this famous unit.

ALLOW  
1 HOUR



### WHITEHEAD RAILWAY MUSEUM

After a short coastal drive, we arrive at the Whitehead Railway Museum. Once inside, we take a step back in time to the age of the steam train and embark on a journey through the history of our railways. With Ireland's largest collection of heritage locomotives and carriages, there's lots to see and do. Hungry? The museum has its very own Edwardian Tea Room for a spot of lunch.

ALLOW  
1 HOUR



### GLENARM CASTLE

A half-hour drive along the Antrim Coast Road brings you to the village of Glenarm and its imposing castle. This has been the ancestral home of the Earls of Antrim for almost 400 years. It is currently owned by Randal, Viscount Dunluce, the son of the 14th Earl of Antrim. It is in pristine condition and stands at the heart of an ancient estate. Walk the grounds and explore the Walled Garden. Why not stay the night in the unique Barbican gatehouse?

ALLOW  
1 HOUR

## Day 2



### CARNLOUGH

Take in the morning mist as you stroll through a village steeped in heritage. Explore the picturesque harbour on Carnlough Bay where you'll see many pleasure boats and fishing boats docked. This harbour features in Season 6 of Game of Thrones®, its old stone steps stand in for a dock in the city of Braavos. Once you've taken in the sights, enjoy a short walk to the village hall where you can discover a wealth of village history in the recently opened Heritage Hub. Finally, take a two mile walk through an old limestone quarry and end your journey at the stunning natural beauty that is Cranny Falls.

ALLOW  
2 HOURS



### GRACEHILL

A 30-minute drive through pastures green will bring us to the peaceful village of Gracehill. In 1759, the Moravian Church started work on a new settlement, just outside of Ballymena. Back in the 18th century, the people of Gracehill led a very structured life. The inhabitants were divided into 'Choirs' and given specific duties and homes. Today, the village continues to respect the heritage left behind and is proud to be Northern Ireland's first conservation area. The Old School in the centre of the village has been turned into a visitor centre where you can learn more about the traditions of this 18th century settlement.

ALLOW  
2 HOURS



### CROSSKEYS INN

Your journey through Mid & East Antrim is drawing to an end. But don't worry, we've saved the most authentic experience for last. Crosskeys Inn, the oldest thatched pub in Ireland, is a true reflection of an Irish bar from days gone by. The atmosphere is incredible. With the sound of traditional Irish music and the light aroma of the roaring turf fires filling the air, it's the best place to enjoy an Irish beverage. So, hold up your Guinness or Irish whiskey of choice and let's toast to our amazing journey through Mid & East Antrim.

ALLOW  
2 HOURS

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