

TOWNS & VILLAGES ITINERARY

The Places That Shaped Us

Highlights

Experience the crisp sea air at Carnlough harbour.

Take in the grandeur of Glenarm Castle and its surrounding gardens.

Explore medieval chambers and an ancient keep in Carrickfergus Castle.

Travel time

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

1³/₄ HOURS

To truly appreciate the splendour of Mid & East Antrim, you must walk its towns and villages. These are places that have grown up from the rolling valleys of the Glens, nourished by the ebb and flow of the sea. They are strewn with the remnants of history, the stately homes of earls and viscounts and the engineering prowess of bold Victorians. You'll meet welcoming, friendly people, whose unique culture was shaped by a turbulent history.

Join us as we go off the beaten track to explore the places that shaped us. Enjoy a jam-packed day of history, tradition and spectacular views.



LARNE

Take in the crisp sea air this fine morning as we start our day in Larne. This pivotal town in Northern Ireland has been welcoming seaborne visitors for over 1000 years and still operates as a port today. Our journey starts with a hearty breakfast in one of Larne's award-winning bakeries, Ann's Pantry. After breakfast, take a stroll along Main Street where you'll find a selection of high street stores and keep a look out for the stunning French Gothic style Town Hall as you go.

ALLOW
1 HOUR





BALLYMENA

Driving 30 minutes inland we arrive in Ballymena, the 'City of Seven Towers', where the Braid Museum offers a fascinating introduction to Mid & East Antrim. Go on a journey from the distant past right to present day through artefacts, photographic exhibitions, and interactive displays. There must be something in Ballymena's crisp air that nurtures talent. Liam Neeson, James Nesbitt and other notable names grew up right here in beautiful Ballymena.

ALLOW
1 HOUR



CARNLOUGH

The short journey to Carnlough is a spectacle all on its own. Driving through the deep green pastures of the Glens of Antrim you will experience the ever-changing landscapes of Northern Ireland. On arrival, we will explore the picturesque harbour on Carnlough Bay where many fishing and pleasure boats are docked. Then, we'll take a two-mile walk through an old limestone quarry and arrive at the cascading waters of Cranny Falls. Take a leisurely stroll back to the village centre and soak up the rich history of Carnlough from the comfort of the Londonderry Arms Hotel. Once owned by Sir Winston Churchill in the 1930s, you can't help thinking about his famous quote "We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us." Did the Londonderry Arms shape the mind of this great leader?

ALLOW
2 HOURS



GLENARM

A short coastal drive and we're here in glorious Glenarm – the oldest village in Northern Ireland. The McDonnell family (the Earls and Viscounts of Antrim) have been part of life here since medieval times. Like any prestigious family, their reign would not be complete without an equally impressive home - Glenarm Castle. The grand estate spans far into the distance and is complete with a Walled Garden, Tea Room, historical structures and much, much more. Take a leisurely amble through the colourful and quaint trails of Glenarm Forest. If you look closely at the river as you pass you may catch a glimpse of a friendly otter. Last but certainly not least, we will visit Steensons Jewellers and watch some of Ireland's finest goldsmiths at work. You may even recognise a few of their pieces from HBO's Game of Thrones®.

ALLOW
2 HOURS





WHITEHEAD

The colourful seafront of Whitehead is like an image from a postcard. This splendid seaside town is nicknamed 'The Town With No Streets'. This is due to the unusual fact that none of the street names actually have the word 'street' in them. A firm favourite for kids and adults alike is the Whitehead Railway Museum. Hop aboard and explore Ireland's largest collection of heritage locomotives and carriages at your leisure. If you'd like to soak up the atmosphere with something to eat, the museum has its very own Edwardian Tea Room for a spot of lunch.

ALLOW
2 HOURS



CARRICKFERGUS

As our journey through Mid & East Antrim comes to a close, we wanted our last stop to be a memorable one. So, we've brought you to Carrickfergus. We'll start our journey at the famous Carrickfergus Castle. Built in the 1100s by the Anglo-Norman adventurer John de Courcy, this historic building tells the tales of ancient kings, cross country invasions, great betrayals and the infamous Siege of Carrickfergus. Walk the cobblestones through medieval chambers, an ancient keep and take in the panoramic views of the Belfast Lough from the looking tower. 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. Lastly, we will reflect on our great journey with an Irish beverage of your choice in Dobbins Inn.

ALLOW
2 HOURS

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