



## family fun breaks



# family fun breaks in carlow

Families can enjoy a perfect holiday in Carlow, with some fantastic activities on offer for both young and old. From acres of woodland parks to family boat trips, superb playgrounds and family entertainment venues, there's something to keep the whole family occupied. A range of family friendly hotels, self-catering, B&B's and guesthouses cater for all – plan an exciting break with your family this summer in Carlow.

### DAY 1

For an outdoor adventure for all the family, hop aboard a traditional Irish open boat with Cliff Reid of Boat Trips.ie Kids will enjoy spotting all manner of wildlife such as kingfishers, otters, dragonflies and shoals of fish as they glide past the boat while adults will love hearing the tales and legends of the river's boatmen. For those with a busy lifestyle, it's the perfect occasion to switch off the mobile phone and relax inches above the waterline, unwinding to a more soothing pace of life.

**Boat Trips.ie, Jetty, Carlow Town Park, Graiguecullen, Carlow t: 087-2061999  
e: boattrips.ie@gmail.com w: www.boattrips.ie**



Delta Sensory Gardens are a joy to discover. Suitable for all ages, visitors can experience the wonderful Waterfall Garden and feed the many fish in the pond, explore the Willow Garden and learn all about the five senses in the Sensory Garden. Then there are the amazing water features to delight both young and old – the gardens feature the famous Kugal, one tonne of pink marble floating on a cushion of water. Consistently voted the number one thing to do in Carlow by Trip Advisor, the gardens have so much to offer during every season of the year. Café Thyme attached to the gardens offers delicious lunches, tea/coffee and snacks – the café is set in a relaxing and spacious atmosphere.

**Delta Sensory Gardens and Garden Centre Strawhall Estate, Carlow. R93 Y959 t: 059 – 9143527  
e: info@deltacentre.org w: www.deltasensorygardens.com**





Adults will love Arboretum Home and Garden Heaven. A five star award-winning garden centre, it features interior furnishings, a kitchen store, fashion outlet and is home to Rachel's Garden Café. Both adults and children meanwhile will love discovering Arboretum Inspirational Gardens – the gardens showcase a variety of planting schemes and garden designs. Families will enjoy exploring the African mud hut and spotting the friendly koi who reside in the Arboretum pond. There is an excellent children's playground and a maze adjacent to the Inspirational Gardens. Rachel's Garden Café has a terrace area located beside the playground so that while the children play, their parents can enjoy delicious home-cooked food.

**Arboretum Home and Garden Heaven, Old Kilkenny Road (R448), Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow. R93 P9F4 t: 059-9721558 e: info@arboretum.ie w: www.arboretum.ie**



## DAY 2

Experience the thrill of a canoeing river trip from **Clashganny**, just south of **Borris Town** over all the weirs and rapids to reach the abbey town of **Graiguenamanagh**.

A canoeing trip with any of the three companies highlighted below is a particularly fun and engaging activity and a fantastic way to experience the river. Professionally guided, all tours are suitable for families and allow you to really appreciate the wide open spaces and unspoilt waterway of the River Barrow, Ireland's second longest river system. Fantastic memories are guaranteed! Your trip starts in **Clashganny**, 5km south of **Borris** (GPS: 52.559831, -6.91537).



### **Go-With-The-Flow River Adventures**

t: 087-2529700

e: info@gowiththeflow.ie

w: www.gowiththeflow.ie

### **Paddle Your Own Canoe**

Milltown, Borris, Co. Carlow.

t: 087-4140461

e: info@paddleyourowncanoe.ie

w: www.paddleyourowncanoe.ie

### **Pure Adventure**

The Quay, Graiguenamanagh,

Co. Kilkenny. t: 087-2265550

e: info@pureadventure.ie

w: www.pureadventure.ie

For a different experience of the River Barrow and an activity that the whole family will enjoy, hire a bike at **Graiguenamanagh Bike Hire at the Waterside Guesthouse** and enjoy a trip from here to St. Mullins. As you leave the town you pass the heritage site of **Tinnahinch Castle**, a Butler stronghold built to defend the ford. The cycle from here to **St. Mullins** is approximately 6km but is full of beauty and drama with frequent weirs and the lofty Brandon Hill rising up to your right.

**Graiguenamanagh Bike Hire, Waterside Guesthouse, Graiguenamanagh, Co. Kilkenny.**

t: 059-9724246 e: bike&hike@watersideguesthouse.com w: www.watersideguesthouse.com



St. Mullins marks the finishing point of this stretch of the cycle. Relax in the **Mullicháin Café** where an outside seat with views of the River Barrow coupled with some great food makes for a fitting and comfortable end to this wonderful cycle. There are a range of light snacks or more substantial options to choose from including home made soups, tasty salads or panini/ciabatta wraps. Open Tuesday to Sunday, except on Bank Holidays, closed on Tuesday instead.

On your return to Graiguenamanagh visit Mount Brandon Pottery School, run by Carmen Wenner, a qualified potter, registered with the Crafts Council of Ireland. Students learn how to make pinch and coil pots and slab building as well as how to throw a pot on the electric potter's wheel. Choose from a two-hour taster class (if you've never done pottery before) or a longer course to gain more insight into the art of pottery. Enjoyable entertainment for all the family to discover and experience.

**Mount Brandon Pottery School, Tinnahinch, Graiguenamanagh, Co. Kilkenny. R95 X583**

t: 085-1108257 e: mountbrandonpottery@gmail.com



*Tinnahinch Castle can be viewed on your trip from Graiguenamanagh to St. Mullins.*