

My Trip to Bunratty Castle and Folk Park




This is a story about visiting Bunratty Castle and Folk Park. It is a very big place with lots to do and see.






Before the visit, I can look at the website and choose what buildings I would like to visit the most.

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BUNRATTY CASTLE

The most complete and authentic Castle in Ireland

Ireland's iconic Bunratty Castle is a must on your itinerary to Ireland. Named after the river Raite which runs alongside this strategic battlement. The spot on which this castle stands has been occupied for over 1000 years. From the Vikings to the Normans, great Irish Earls and noble Lords and Ladies. Graciously restored in the 1960's and furnished by Lord Gorts magnificent collection of medieval furniture and furnishings, this is your chance to experience a window on Ireland's past and explore the acclaimed 15th century Bunratty Castle.

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When I get to the entrance, there may be a long queue to get in, and I may have to wait. I can bring some toys or books in my bag to have fun while I wait.



I can then go to the main desk where the man or lady on the desk will tell me if I should visit the castle or the village first.



I can get a map so I can find my favourite parts while I am there.

Bunratty Castle & Folk Park

Bunratty Folk Park is a living reconstruction of the homes and environment of Ireland over a century ago. Rural farmhouses, a village street complete with shops and Bunratty House with its formal regency gardens are recreated and furnished as they would have appeared at the time.

- 1 Loop Head House**
The house of a fishing-farming family in West Clare. The thatch is roped down to protect it against the Atlantic gales.
- 2 Blacksmiths Forge**
The blacksmith made tools for many other craftworkers and tradesmen. The hand-operated bellows kept the fire blazing. He was one of the most important and respected members of the community.
- 3 Cashan Fisherman's House**
A simple two-bedroomed home of a North Kerry salmon fisherman. Much of the timber would have been shipped from the sea. The floor is of rammed clay.
- 4 Bunratty Castle Information overleaf.**
- 5 Mountain Farmhouse**
A poor farmer's house of a type found on the borders of Limerick and Kerry. It has a loft for extra sleeping space.
- 6 Weaver's Shed**
A wooden outbuilding for housing the loom of the weaver.
- 7 Shannon Farmhouse**
This was the first farmhouse to be reconstructed in the Folk Park. It originally stood on the site of the main runway at Shannon Airport.
- 8 Ballyhen Scold**
One roomed dwelling of a poor landless labourer who worked for the local landlord. Many of these houses and their occupants were lost during the Great Irish Famine.
- 9 Golden Vale Farmhouse**
The home of a farmer from the rich lands in the Golden Vale Counties of Limerick & Tipperary. It has stables/barns & a corn barn. Come in & meet the Bean an Tí (Woman of the House).
- 10 The Tea Room**
A type in the Golden Vale farmyard houses a Tea Room & outside is a picnic area.
- 11 The School House**
From Behar in East Clare. It would have accommodated up to eighty children.

- 12 The Village Street**
The village houses & shops have been chosen from many different areas, to form a collection of typical 19th century urban Irish buildings.
- A The Doctor's House**
The parlour is used as both dispensary & surgery.
- B Artisan House**
Small thatched dwelling house which has been adapted as a potter's workshop.
- C Brown's Pawnbroker**
These shops were often an important part of the local economy.
- D J.J. Corry's Pub**
Typical village pub. The family kitchen would also be used by well known customers.
- E Sean O'Farrell's Drapery**
Irish linen, poplin & woollens were famous. The family rooms were upstairs.
- F Foster's Printworks**
Typical of a small town printer which produced pamphlets, handbills, notices & newspapers, setting all the type by hand.
- G Tannery Houses**
Built for workers in expanding towns & villages. These are now used to house small enterprises. In No. 1, Bridget's traditional Irish handknits & woollens. No. 2, O'Brien Studio which is a working 19th century photographic studio with an exhibition of photographs from towns & villages of 19th century Ireland from the famous Lawrence Collection.
- H Capill's Grocery**
Increasingly, in this period, the grocer sold foodstuffs which had previously been home produced as well as imported goods.
- I McInerney & Sons Hardware**
Factory produced tools & utensils began to be available in the late 19th century, replacing items previously made by local craftsmen.
- J Post Office**
Adjoining the post office is the M. Quinn Drapery, linen & lace. The post office, an integral part of village life, was to be found in all parts of the country by the end of the 19th century.
- K P. MacNamara & Sons Bar/Hotel**
As business began to grow about the turn of the 19th century, accommodation was needed for commercial travellers & others. The hotel bar is fully licensed & provides modern catering facilities.
- L Traveller Wagons**
The horse drawn wagon was the main type of transport used in the past by the Irish ethnic group known as travellers.

- 13 Hazelbrook House**
Built in 1898, this was home to the Hughes Brothers who started a dairy industry in the 1890s & later produced HB Ice Cream which became a household ice cream brand in Ireland.
- 14 Bunratty House**
A late Georgian dwelling (built 1804) of the type occupied by minor gentry in the 19th century. It was home to the Studdart Family, descendants of the O'Briens who lived in Bunratty Castle.
- 15 Talbot Collection**
Nineteenth century agricultural machinery & implements are housed in the stable yard in Bunratty House. Explanatory Audio Visual.
- 16 Regency Walled Garden**
Built close to Bunratty House and is part of the original much larger garden which existed. Views overlook the Owenagarny river and Shannon river.
- 17 North Clare Farmhouse**
Reflects the building style & materials of the rocky Moher area of north County Clare.
- 18 Ardaraigh Church**
The Church was moved stone by stone from Ardaraigh in County Tipperary to Bunratty Folk Park.
- 19 Horizontal Mill**
A working corn mill based on findings of an excavation in Mashanaglas, County Cork.
- 20 Vertical Mill**
A classical example of a rural undershot watermill.
- 21 Bore Dwelling**
An example from County Mayo of a dwelling occupied by both the family & their milking cows. Pigsty nearby.
- 22 Gift Shop & Exit**

Village Street

Folk Park

Bunratty Castle

Entrance / Exit
Car Park

11 Food & Refreshments

MacNamara's Pub (Mac's)
MacNamara's Pub or Mac's as its affectionately known is renowned for its delicious home cooked food - whether it's a Creamy Irish coffee, soup & sandwiches or a tasty lunch. Mac's old style pub is a superb choice! (Apr-Dec)

The Tea Room
A delightful place to relax and enjoy a cup of tea with some home made buttered scones, soda bread or our delicious apple pie with cream freshly baked by the Bean an Tí. (Mar-Nov)

The Corn Barn
The Corn Barn is available for group lunches offering good food at reasonable prices including hot & cold, soup, sandwiches and desserts. (Group Bookings only - Pre-booking required)

Something for the Kids
Keep an eye out for our animal friends. Playground area at rear of Village Street.

- Sheep
- Cows & Cattle
- Irish Red Deer
- Hens & Ducks
- Pigs
- Donkeys & Horses
- Irish Wolfhounds
- Playground

SAFETY STATEMENT
Visitors must exercise extreme care as these historical buildings contain uneven steps, floors and headroom. Children must be accompanied at all times. Last Admission to Castle 4.00pm

When I get inside the main entrance – I can go to the toilets by the shop.



In the park, I will see many different animals including donkeys, pigs, goats, geese, deer and even some Irish wolf hounds.



Some animals may stay far away.



Some animals may come very close. I can move away from the animals if I feel anxious or scared



There are many animals that are not where they would usually be. These animals sleep and play in the fields. I might see a chicken or a goose walk in front of me. Or the Wolf Hounds might be out for their walk.

I will only look and watch. The animals feel scared if I chase them and they may get sick if I feed them food that is not in their normal diet.



If I have a question I can ask one of the people in a green top with the Bunratty sign on it.

I will also visit many small houses and cottages in the park and see what life was like in Ireland many years ago.



I can ask the men and women in costumes some questions about these houses. They might tell stories of what it was like to be a boy or girl in the 19th Century.



I can visit the play-ground and take turns on the zip wire. I can also have fun on the ladders and climbing frames.



There is another set of toilets by the playground.



I can visit the school house and see the old desks and maybe even the teacher.



I can visit the fairy village and see all the little fairy doors.



There is a tea room near the village. A lot of people chose to eat cakes and drink tea here. I can also choose a sandwich and a drink. I will have to wait to get my food. I can then sit at a table to eat.



I can also visit the Castle. There are so many steps and rooms and things to learn. I can ask the tour guides questions. I'll know they are the tour guides as they will be wearing lovely costumes. They can tell me loads of interesting facts about the castle.



Before I leave I can visit the gift shop. There are lots of different toys and gifts on sale there. I have to wait in line to purchase my items – this can take a little time.

