



THE STORY OF COUNTY MONAGHAN

DISCOVER THE HIDDEN GEMS OF COUNTY MONAGHAN ON THIS TWO-DAY, SELF-GUIDED TOUR, TAKING IN ANCIENT MONASTIC SITES, UNSPOILT LANDSCAPES, PICTURESQUE VILLAGES, MUSEUM TREASURES & MUCH MORE.

DAY ONE

Start your journey through County Monaghan's treasures at the award-winning Monaghan County Museum which showcases over 5,000 years of the incredible history of this beautiful region.

From Monaghan, travel north to the scenic village of **Glaslough** and immerse yourself in the story of the illustrious Leslie family. Owners of the beautiful Glaslough Estate, the Leslie dynasty began over a thousand years ago, when a young Hungarian nobleman named Bartholomew Leslie married the Queen of Scotland's sister. Moving forward to the 1600s, John Leslie, known as 'the fighting bishop', bought the land around beautiful Glaslough, extending the castle and building **Saint Salvator's Church**. Over many generations, the colourful Leslie clan has included several famous diplomats, writers and soldiers.

Today, the castle on the estate is still a family home but is also a luxurious hotel. A host of activities are on offer for residential guests including the famous world class equestrian centre. But what of the timeless village that

grew up alongside the castle? One of Ireland's hidden gems, it is full of characters and stories of its own. The **Glaslough Heritage Trail App** will guide you through this intriguing history for free.

Travelling further north, nestled along the border with County Armagh, you will find the picturesque village of **Mullan**. A place where time has stood still, the village has hardly changed since its days as the centre of the linen industry in the region in the late 18th century. The town continued to prosper when Charles Powell Leslie later built a flax mill and houses for the town's workers.

Sadly, Mullan suffered badly during the 'Troubles' and with dwindling industry, the town fell into disrepair. More recently the village has begun to prosper once again. Now part of the beautiful **Blackwater Heritage Trail**, the village is a popular place for those wishing to imagine Irish country life of the past. While in Mullan, you can also pick up some wonderful handcrafted Irish pottery at **Busy Bee Ceramics** in the village, have a go on the potter's wheel and talk to Brenda about this ancient Irish craft.



DAY TWO

The second day of this trip takes you south-west, to the fascinating town of Clones, where just decades after St Patrick brought Christianity to Ireland, St Tighernach founded a monastery. You can still see the Round Tower that was a beacon to weary Christian pilgrims and a bell tower calling all to prayer.

The abbey was attacked time and again by both Vikings and Normans. After one terrible assault in the 12th century, the abbey and the town, were destroyed. From the ashes, a new abbey was built, known to locals as 'the Wee Abbey', which still stands today. And what happened to Tighernach himself? After becoming a hermit, he was buried in a richly decorated sarcophagus in the graveyard. The battles didn't end there however and the Normans fought a running war with the Irish chieftains who had previously ruled the area. Standing on the raised bank of the Norman fort at the highest point of town, you can imagine the vicious clash of cultures raging around you.

A scenic, 30-minute drive east brings you to one of Ireland's finest angling destinations - Lough Muckno. Surrounded by 200 acres of wooded terrain, this is a wonderful spot for walks or bike rides through beautiful forest glades and lakeside trails.

Having travelled south to the market town of Carrickmacross, find out about the town's rich history by following the Heritage Trail or visit the Carrickmacross Workhouse to discover the tragic tale of the Great Famine

in the area. One of the few remaining workhouses in the country, you will hear how one million people died in Ireland through hunger and hardship, and over one million more emigrated.

At the Carrickmacross Lace Gallery you will hear the fascinating story of the beautiful lace which adorned Kate Middleton, the Duchess of Cambridge's stunning wedding dress. The story began in the 1820s with a determined woman named Mrs Grey Porter who began teaching the local women appliqué so that they could earn a living. Made by the poor for the rich and famous, the exquisite lace became increasingly popular. However, Kate was not the first royal to wear Carrickmacross Lace, the sleeves of Princess Diana's famous wedding dress were also trimmed with it. Today, the exquisite lace is still hand-worked by passionate craftswomen in the town.

Your trip to Monaghan would not be complete without a visit to the Patrick Kavanagh Centre situated in a beautiful old church in the nearby village of Inniskeen. The centre recounts the life and work of one of Ireland's best-loved poets and provides a performance tour of 'Kavanagh Country', which takes in local sites immortalised by Kavanagh - with anecdotes, historical facts, wild rumours and even the odd poem recited along the way.

With the diversity of accommodation on offer in Carrickmacross, you may choose to finish up your adventure in a luxury hotel, the traditional comfort of a country house hotel or in the homely atmosphere of a country pub guesthouse or bed & breakfast.



This is just a taste of what Monaghan has to offer. Visit www.monaghantourism.com for more itineraries, trips and tours around this wonderful county!

