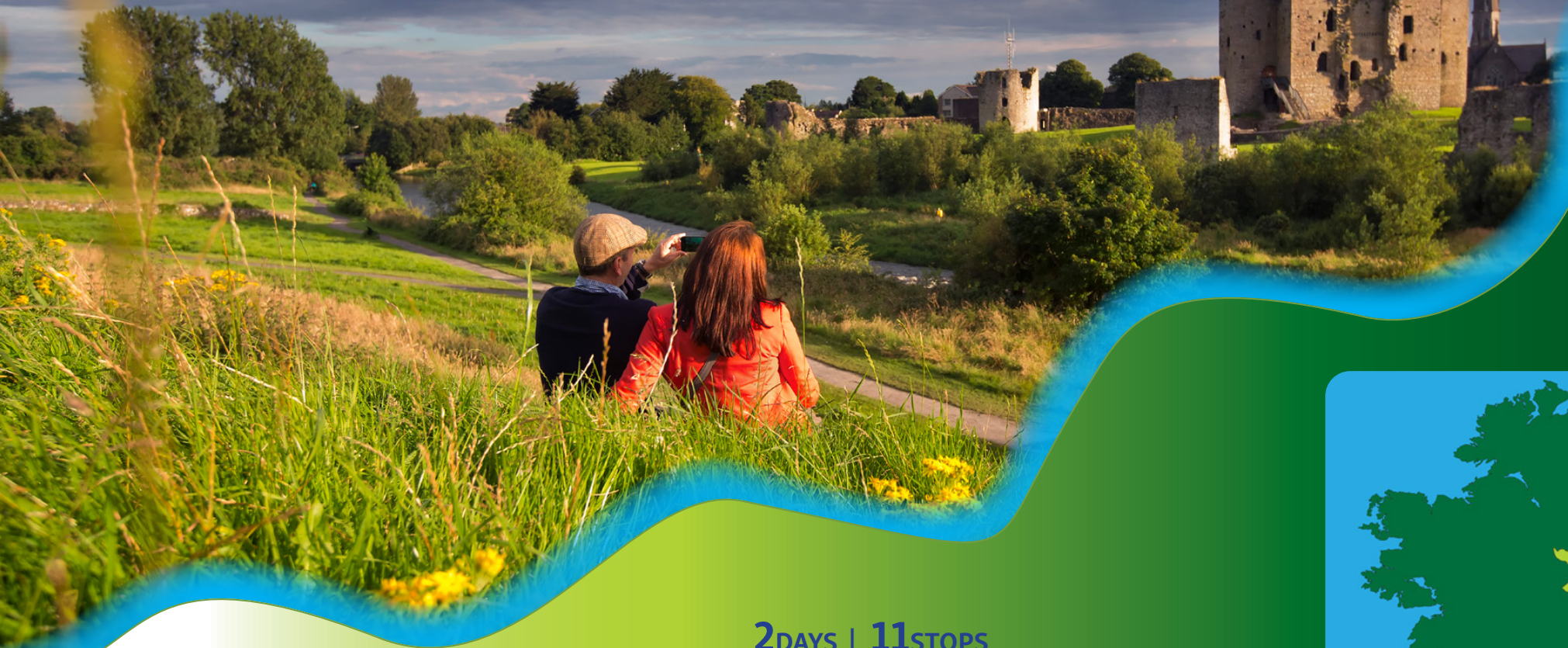


arts & culture in the **BOYNE VALLEY**



2DAYS | 11STOPS

Located just 30 minutes north of Dublin, the Boyne Valley sits at the very heart of **Ireland's Ancient East**. With five millennia of **cultural & archaeological wonders** to explore, you will find a wide range of engaging **museums, galleries & historical sites**, along with the very best in **live performance & dining experiences**.





Day 1

1. Brú na Bóinne
2. Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre

Day 2

1. Slane Castle, Slane Distillery & village craft shops
2. Drogheda galleries, museums & heritage sites
3. Monasterboice

Other Points of Interest

- A. Skylight Gallery
- B. Solstice Arts Centre
- C. The Venue Theatre
- D. Droichead Arts Centre
- E. TLT Theatre
- F. Barbican

DAY 1

The Boyne Valley has five millennia of cultural and archaeological wonders to explore through a wide range of engaging cultural activities and interactive experiences.

What better place to start your exploration of the Boyne Valley than in the [UNESCO World Heritage Site at Brú na Bóinne](#) - one of the world's most important prehistoric

landscapes. Brú na Bóinne is dominated by the three well-known and celebrated passage tombs of Knowth, Newgrange and Dowth. Built some 5,000 years ago, they are older than both Stonehenge and Egypt's pyramids! Both Newgrange and Knowth are accessible from the visitor centre at Brú na Bóinne (*to access the chamber at Newgrange pre-booking is essential*).

The **new, state of the art, immersive visitor experience** transports visitors back 5,000 years to the construction of the monuments,

it explores the seasonal nature of **Stone Age society**, the significance of the solar cycle, and the **tomb-building process**. Visitors can drive directly to Dowth but there is no public access to the passage chambers. Lunch can be enjoyed in the visitor centre.

After lunch, a 20 minute journey south will bring you to the fascinating [Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre](#) where you can discover more about one of the **most significant events in Irish and English history**. The Battle of the Boyne was fought between the Protestant King William III and the Catholic King James II in 1690. The kings were rival claimants to the English, Scottish and Irish thrones. King William had deposed King James two years earlier and the **ferocious battle is brought to life** in the visitor centre with a **laser battle site model, an audio visual film, real and replica weaponry and interactive guided tours**.

The visitor centre is located in the restored 18th century **Oldbridge House** where you can enjoy the beautiful **Victorian gardens, tea rooms** and a series of fascinating **battle-site walks along the river**.



For the **evening's entertainment** there are some great venues in the area that play host to some of **Ireland's best musical, comedy and acting talent** - check out [Solstice Arts Centre](#) in Navan, [The Venue Theatre](#) in Ratoath, [Droichead Arts Centre](#), TLT Theatre or the [Barbican](#) - all in Drogheda, for some top quality thrills, spills and giggles.

DAY 2

Start your day with a visit to one of the Boyne Valley's undisputed gems, the 250-year-old [Slane Castle](#) just outside Slane village which has been home to the Conyngham family since 1703. The guided tour takes in the **sumptuous 18th century interiors** and stories from both the family and the castle's colourful past. A tour of [Slane Distillery](#), housed within the old stable building of the castle pays homage to

300 years of Conyngham family history through an **interactive and immersive tour**. The tour concludes with a **taste of the distillery's signature triple casked blend, 'Slane Irish Whiskey'** - a must for all those over 18! Visitors under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

The life and work of Slane-born poet, **Francis Ledwidge** can also be explored in the museum dedicated to him in the village. Visit the [Skylight Gallery](#), just *25 minutes away* in **Julianstown** for beautiful traditional landscape and portrait paintings or for **larger-scale visual art exhibitions** by local and international artists check out [Solstice Arts Centre](#), Navan, just *15 minutes south*. Next, head *15 minutes east* to the walled-town of **Drogheda** where you'll find a number of **great galleries and museums** telling the fascinating story of this medieval town. A

walking tour can be taken from the [Tourist Office](#) on West Street or take a stroll around the town at your own leisure enjoying some of the town's many fantastic **medieval monuments**.

St Laurence's Gate is one of only a handful of town-wall gates which remains today and it is widely regarded as one of the **finest of its kind in Europe**. Be sure to stop at the fascinating but slightly spooky early-16th century **carved cadaver stone at St Peter's Church of Ireland**. At seven feet tall, the stone depicts two carved skeletons representing Edward Golding and Elizabeth Fleming, whose family were once the Barons of Slane. There are less than ten of these grim cadaver stones remaining in Ireland today. Designed in the French gothic style, the impressive [St Peter's Catholic Church](#) is only *five minutes away* and houses the beautifully ornate and slightly macabre shrine to



Saint Oliver Plunkett in which you can view the **17th century saint's preserved head!**

After lunch in one of **Drogheda's many fine cafes, restaurants and pizzerias** head to the **Highlanes Gallery** which is located in the former beautiful **Franciscan Church** and holds exhibitions both from **Drogheda's Municipal Art Collection** along with **renowned Irish and international artists.**

Make sure to see the impressive **mace and sword** on display here, which were given to the Corporation of Drogheda by King William III of Orange, shortly after the Battle of the Boyne, to replace the previous mace, which James II had melted down to enhance his depleted exchequer! Just a short distance away and housed within a large fort that played a crucial part in Drogheda's history, **Millmount**



Museum houses various exhibitions on **Irish archaeology, folklife, local history, geology, industry and military history.**

The museum also contains one of the four surviving examples of an ancient type of fishing vessel, called a **coracle**, that was once a common sight along the River Boyne. You can also pick up some **fantastic local craft** direct from a number of artisan craft makers who are also located within the building.

To see what is considered one of the **finest High Crosses in Ireland**, take a **10 minute drive north** to the early Christian settlement of **Monasterboice** in Co. Louth. Standing at 5.5m high, the cross features biblical carvings of both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, a copy of the cross is held in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.



For those with a passion for interiors and gardens, just a **ten-minute drive north** will bring you to stunning, 17th century stately house, **Beaulieu House and Gardens**. Connected to both the Plunkett and Tichbourne families, the house is dripping with **beautiful antiques, fine furnishings and paintings by many famous early 20th-century Irish artists.** The **beautiful walled gardens** provide fantastic views over the Boyne Valley. Access is by **pre-booked tours (groups only)** or during **National Heritage Week** held in August every year.

There are a number of other **wonderful gardens and stately homes** that can be visited throughout the Boyne Valley, for more information visit **www.discoverboynevalley.ie**