



David McGuffin's
EXPLORING EUROPE

BLARNEY

DESTINATION GUIDE



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Introduction

Blarney Castle was originally a wooden structure built sometime prior to 1200 AD. It was subsequently burned down and a stone structure was erected in 1210. This stone structure was subsequently de-stroyed and used for the foundation of the current castle built in 1446. It is in a state of partial ruin; however, you can explore the castle's many curving staircases and rooms, along with its lush grounds.

While visiting the castle, you don't want to miss out on the Blarney Stone. There are several legends surrounding the origin of the stone. One is that Cormac Laidir MacCarthy, who built the castle in 1446, was involved in a law suit. He asked the goddess Cliodhna for assistance to ensure his win, who told him to kiss the first stone he found in the morning on his way to court. When pleading his case, he was able to persuade the court with such flattery and charm that he won. MacCarthy then used the stone in the parapet of the castle.

Another story is that Queen Elizabeth I was requesting an oath of loyalty from Cormac Teige McCarthy in order for him to keep his lands. McCarthy gave that loyalty to the queen with-out actually giving in and she proclaimed that he was giving her a “lot of blarney.”

The Blarney Stone supposedly gives the kisser the gift of “blarney” or the ability to speak so elo-quently that even a lie sounds like the truth!

Kissing the Stone - Follow the marked pathway in the castle to kiss the Blarney Stone. You will travel up through several narrow winding staircases. Once you get to the top, be careful! You have to hang upside down to plant your lips on the stone as it juts out of the castle below the parapet. Don’t worry, there is a grate underneath the spot where you hang out, and an assistant will help you lie down on your back and then get back up. They not lost anyone , yet!

Blarney Gardens

Between the entrance gates and the distant lake lie 60 acres of surprises, delights and mysteries waiting to be discovered. There is a network of paths that lead visitors through various gardens, arboretums, and avenues, which are a

constantly changing and evolving environment throughout the seasons.

The [Blarney Castle website](#) has much more information about the castle and gardens.

Blarney Woolen Mills

Right outside the castle and across the street is the Blarney Woolen Mills. We will park or coach in the Blarney Woolen Mills parking.

You will find pretty much anything Irish you could ever want to buy in the shop. They have linens, sweaters, jewelry, crystals, and many souvenirs.

A fine cafe and restaurant is nextdoor serving hearty stews, fish and chips, roasts, slaades, and more.



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