

Mykidstime Family Guide to Dublin

"Dublin can be heaven. With coffee at eleven and a stroll through Stephens Green"



Welcome to the Mykidstime Guide to Dublin. We have put together some suggestions to make your city break with the children as enjoyable as possible. As parents ourselves, we are delighted to share some of our favourite family friendly places around the Capital. Visit www.mykidstime.ie for lots more suggestions for things to do while you are in Dublin

The Mykidstime Team

Our Top Recommended Things to Do and See

Viking Roaaaaaaaarrrr!

Have a Viking Day!! **Viking Splash** is Dublin's only amphibious tour! See the sights of Dublin on land and water! This unique tour is a huge hit for all ages and kids in particular love donning the Viking hats and roaring out at passersby (Passengers must be four to partake in the water part of the tour)! After viewing Dublin as a Viking, a visit to **Dublinia** is also recommended. Dublinia allows visitors to experience Dublin throughout the ages. Encompassing three exhibitions - Viking, Medieval and Historical Dublin, there are also regular family events, hunts and workshops.

The National Museums of Ireland

Dublin is home to three of Ireland's National Museums and all three offer free entry and a fantastic family programme. The Museum of Natural History ("the Dead Zoo") is ever popular with children as they can get up close to over 2 million scientific specimens and the sight of the skeleton of a humpback whale suspended from the ceiling is guaranteed to enthral the kids! The Museum of Archaeology and Museum of Decorative Arts and History are also highly recommended and all over and Explore and Learn Programme with family friendly info sheets, art packs and regular family workshops and tours.

Dublin Zoo

With over 1 million visitors in 2011, Dublin Zoo remains the Capital's most popular tourist attraction. Always a great day out, the Gorilla enclosure is a must-see! Visit the African Plains, the Elephant Enclosure and get up close with the snakes and lizards in the Reptile House. There are several play areas throughout the zoo and picnic tables, family bathrooms and baby changing.

The Ark

Located in the middle of Temple Bar, The Ark is Ireland's only dedicated cultural space for children. This unique building is designed specifically for children aged 2 to 12 and allows them to explore everything from music, theatre and literature to painting, film, dance and more.

Lark in the Park

St Stephen's Green Park is always worth a visit. Stroll through the leafy walkways, feed the ducks and the playground has recently been refurbished. **The Iveagh Gardens** is less well known but much loved by Dubliners and only a stone's throw away from St Stephen's Green off Harcourt Street. This is a beautiful park to enjoy a walk or picnic in, with stunning gardens and a very pretty waterfall and less busy than other city parks, a true oasis in the middle of the city.

Shows, Matches, Concert, Festivals

With a wealth of theatres and stadiums around the city, check our **events pages** to see what is taking place when you visit Dublin. Be it a match in the Aviva or Croke Park or a musical in the Grand Canal Theatre or one of the regular festivals in Dublin geared towards families.



A City Walk

Dublin City is awash with history and a simple stroll through town can show you some of its treasures. Visit the crypts at Christchurch Cathedral before stopping by to visit the tomb of St Valentine in Whitefriar St Church. Walk from College Green down to the GPO and see if you can find the bullet holes from the 1916 Rising on both the Bank of Ireland building and the GPO. Make sure to visit the Book of Kells in Trinity College. Tours of Government Buildings take place every Saturday morning, prebooking is necessary. A ramble through Temple Bar and up Grafton Street will always entertain children with buskers, musicians, street performances every couple of feet.

If you fancy a longer walk, take off down the quays, through the docklands along the Liffey River. This area of Dublin has been completely regenerated in recent years and it's an enjoyable walk. You will pass the Jeannie Johnston tall ship and there are often navy ships docked along this stretch of the Liffey. At the end of this walk is the renovated Point Village and home of both O2 Stadium and The Dublin Eye - the view from the top is breathtaking on a clear day but not for the faint hearted on a windy day!! If little legs get exhausted the Luas now travels to here so you can easily hop back on for the return journey to the centre of town.



Where to Eat

The majority of restaurants in Dublin are very family friendly however space can be an issue, so if you have a small child/children, expect buggies to be taken and stored at the door. Here are some of our favourites!

Carluccios, Dawson Street, D2 - Highly recommend for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a coffee and cake. This Italian restaurant is extremely family friendly with great service and fabulous food. Also recommend you check out their in-store shop for sauces, coffee and herbs and spices.

Ely Gastro Pub, Grand Canal Square, D2 - Tasty, fresh food is the order of the day in this fab, funky gastro pub. The kids menu in particular is worth a mention, as the choice is fantastic and half portions are available. Coupled with great service and delicious desserts, Ely Gastro Pub is highly recommended.

Captain America's, Grafton St, D2 - An institution in itself, Captain America's on Grafton Street is always worth a visit for lunch or dinner. Kids will enjoy checking out the memorabilia and signatures of all its famous visitors over the years and there is a huge menu for both adults and children.

Wagamama, St King St, D2 - Fresh, tasty Japanese food, very family friendly and a lovely menu, chopsticks always a favourite with the little people!

Marks and Spencers, Grafton St, D2 - The Roof Top Cafe in M&S is a bright and spacious cafe overlooking Grafton St. Offering a full a la carte menu for both adults and children, this is a nice spot for something to eat and the desserts are great!

Thunder Road Cafe, Fleet St, D2 - Always a favourite with tourists and Dubliners alike, this restaurant in the heart of Temple Bar is renowned for its Burgers and kids eat free.

Elephant and Castle, Temple Bar, D2 - Open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner, this New York style restaurant is highly recommended. Their chicken wings are the most ordered and talked about chicken wings in Dublin!



Where to Stay

Dublin city is full of hotels, here are a selection which offer family rooms to suit all budgets, here are a selection.

**Radisson Blu
Golden Lane
D8**

www.radissonblu.ie/royalhotel-dublin

+353 (01) 898 2900

Newly refurbished, this hotel is a five minute walk from Stephen's Green.

**The Clarence
Wellington Quay
D2**

www.theclarence.ie

+353 (0)1 407 0800

The hotel owned by Bono and The Edge places emphasis on their younger guests with a nod to children in all elements of the hotel including a kids cocktail on arrival and a milk and cookies turn down service. The Clarence's location is perfect for exploring the city.

**Pearse Hotel
Pearse St
D2**

www.pearsehotel.com

+353 (0)1 670 3666

The Pearse Hotel (formerly the Holiday Inn) offers affordable family friendly location in the heart of the city.

**Best Western Academy Plaza Hotel
10-14 Findlater Place
D1**

www.academyplazahotel.ie

+353 (0)1 878 0666

Situated just off O'Connell Street, this large hotel is a good choice for families. Check out their special offers and discounted rates for affordable family friendly accommodation.

**Kinlay House Hotel
Temple Bar
D2**

www.kinlaydublin.ie

+353 (0)1 679 6644

Kinlay House is a fantastic hostel in the heart of Dublin. They offer a selection of private rooms with en-suite making this a great choice for families on a budget. Kinlay also offers a free breakfast every morning. Early booking strongly recommended.



Shopping

The main shopping thoroughfares in Dublin City are **Grafton Street** and Henry Street, both pedestrianised and home of the famous Dublin department stores of Brown Thomas and Arnotts, high street fashion stores, jewellers, shoe shops and the other usual suspects.

The Disney Store recently opened on Grafton Street, while pricey, it is worth a visit or a bribe.

Temple Bar offers a more eclectic choice of shops and if in Dublin on a Saturday, Temple Bar is a must with its book market, food market and Designer Mart on Cows Lane, taking place every Saturday.

A stroll down **Moore Street** (off Henry Street) is a must-see with its traditional fruit and veg market stalls and from there you can walk on to Parnell Street dubbed Dublin's "Chinese Village". If you like to cook oriental food, a visit to the Chinese stores in this area will enable you to stock up on a huge variety of Asian foodstuffs, spices, rice and more and all at great prices.

If travelling to Dublin by car, you will come into the city via the M50. Dotted along the M50 are the main Dublin shopping centres so perhaps leave this shopping for your way home. **Dundrum Town Centre**, **Liffey Valley** and **Blanchardstown** are all large shopping centres with restaurants and cinemas too.

Chances are, you may just "need" to visit the Republic's only IKEA off the M50 at J4. If visiting IKEA at the weekend, get there early! IKEA is one of the most family friendly shopping experiences in Dublin, with a free drop off children's play area (book in, upon arrival) baby feeding areas and play areas dotted throughout the store. Ikea also offer the cheapest family friendly dining in Dublin. Their meatballs are famous and cost €1.99.

Other Useful Information

Parking in Dublin City is expensive and often difficult to find. We recommend if staying outside the city to avail of public transport. Dublin is well served by Dublin Bus, the Dart and Luas.

We have only given recommendations for Dublin City in this guide. Please visit Mykidstime.ie for more information on things to see and do in Dublin county and to find out what is on in Dublin when you plan to visit. If you have any questions or specific recommendations please email us dublin@mykidstime.ie.

We hope you have a fantastic time in Dublin!