



## Mykidstime Family Guide to Wicklow

Welcome to the Mykidstime Guide to Wicklow. We have put together some suggestions to make your family's visit to Wicklow as enjoyable as possible. As parents ourselves, we are delighted to share with you some of the family friendly spots round the great garden county!

**The Mykidstime Team**

### Top Ten Things to do in Wicklow



1. Sealife and Bray Seafront – enjoy ice-cream or candy floss, pop into the amusements and maybe even catch a funfair or festival depending on the time of the year.
2. Powerscourt Waterfall and Gardens will satisfy all ages and offer a great day out.
3. Clara Lara Outdoor Adventure Centre is an excellent way to have some healthy and wet fun.
4. Visit one of Wicklows many beaches, including the spectacular 5km stretch of beautiful white sand dunes and clean beaches at Brittas Bay which has won and maintained the Blue Flag for many years.
5. Glendalough. Visit the famous lakes and St Kevin's Tower. Can you stretch your arms around St. Kevin's cross and have your wishes granted?
6. You can't miss the famous Gardens in Irelands 'Garden County' including Mount Usher Gardens in Ashford, Killruddery House and Gardens Bray or Russborough House and Gardens in Blessington.
7. Go for a walk in one of the many forests in Wicklow. Details of 15 Coillte forest parks can be found at [www.coillteoutdoors.ie](http://www.coillteoutdoors.ie)
8. Spend a day on the farm at either Glenroe Farm Kilcoole, Tick Tock Activity Farm in Arklow (for the younger families) or Greenan Farm, Maze and Museum in Rathdrum
9. Go Fishing. Annamoe offers the most child friendly facilities (they throw the catch back).
10. Visit Tullow and make a day of it between Rathwood and the Chocolate Factory next door.



## Indoor Things to Do in Wicklow



- Visit one of the county's 13 libraries including Ballywaltrim library on the Boghall Road, Bray.
- Catch a movie in the Gaiety Cinema in Arklow or art house movies in the Mermaid Arts Centre, Bray.
- Go bowling in The Diamond Bowl & Kidzone in Wicklow town or Bray Bowl on the Quinnsboro Road.
- Visit the indoor playcentres at Greystones (Zoom – [www.zap.ie](http://www.zap.ie)), Kilcoole (Jungle Mania 01 2017730) or Wicklow Town (Diamond Bowl and Kidzone <http://www.wicklowbowl.ie>)
- Visit Star Leisure on Bray seafront for some indoor entertainment.
- Call Rainy Days Studios in Wicklow town to paint your own pottery (0404) 79343
- Visit the historic Wicklow Gaol in Wicklow Town, one of the most haunted places in Ireland
- Discover the National Sea life Centre in Bray. Check out their website for cheaper admission prices <http://www.visitsealife.com/Bray/>
- Kids & adults will enjoy a workshop in the Chocolate Garden of Ireland (on the border of Carlow but on Wicklow soil!) 12 euro will cover a 2 hour workshop where adults and children can learn all about making chocolate and make their own souvenir to take home with them. Call in advance (059) 6481999

## Outdoor Things To Do



- Visit some of our beaches, including our Blue Flag beaches at Brittas Bay South, Brittas Bay North and Greystones.
- Glendalough Visitor Centre/ Wicklow Mountains National Park  
<http://www.wicklowmountainsnationalpark.ie/> (Free parking at Glendalough and €4 euro at the National Park , 25 minute walk between the two)
- National Garden Exhibition Centre, Kilquade which has a play area with seating area for the café so it's a relaxing venue for adults in charge.
- Explore the many walks at Avondale House and Forest Park – The Charles Stewart Parnell Museum, Rathdrum. Café and Playground on site.
- Enjoy the playground, snack shop and have your own BBQ beside the waterfall at Powerscourt Gardens and Waterfall, Enniskerry
- Visit Tara's Palace Museum of childhood which has recently moved from Malahide Castle, Dublin out to Powerscourt House [www.taraspalace.ie](http://www.taraspalace.ie)
- Take a nature walk at some of our forest parks (numerous) or for something different visit the Indian Sculpture Park in roundwood (Seasonal. Under 16's free)  
<http://www.victoriasway.eu/>
- View one of the most beautiful house in Ireland at Russborough House, Blessington  
<http://www.russborough.ie> where the children will enjoy finding Cupid in the 2000 sq meter maze
- Explore the beautiful grounds and set for many movies at Killruddery House and Gardens, Bray <http://www.killruddery.com/>
- Mount Usher Gardens, Ashford which also has an Avoca shop on site.
- Visit Ballykissangle, Avoca, and the meeting of the waters.
- Shoreline Sports Park, Charlesland hosts the largest stakeboard/BMX park in the country (age 10+ and open on dry days only) along with other facilities including an



all-weather football pitch available to hire individually.

<http://www.shorelineleisure.ie/Charlesland.charlesland.0.html>

- Visit a pet farm such as Glenroe Farm in Kilcoole or Greenan Farm Museum and Maze, Rathdrum.
- The younger kids will be kept amused for hours in the Tick Tock activity Farm, Arklow with their activity bus, pet farm, play area and fast track race track ( Café and baby changing area on site, phone 040 233624)
- If your children are 8 or above spend a half day of activities in Kippure Estate, Blessington (at time of writing these were available Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays and cost €39 per person). Avon Ri Activity Resort is an alternative with 4 star accommodation with restaurant and bar (see accommodation for further info)
- Next door to the chocolate factory (Tullow, but not really Carlow) visit Rathwood Home, gift and Garden World where the restaurant is buggy friendly with baby changing & high chairs available & a train ride takes you along woodlands walks down to feed the ducks. Woodlands falconry on site opens Wednesday to Sunday (admission fee) & there is an animal farm and playground too.
- Clara Lara Fun Park opens from May to September offering outdoor adventure for all ages. <http://www.claralara.com/>
- If your children are old enough to appreciate bigger walks why not climb the Big or Little Sugar Loaf or take the Bray to Greystones Cliff Walk for some spectacular scenery
- Go horse riding in one of the several equestrian centres such as the Brennanstown Riding school Kilmacanogue or Happy Days Horse and Pony Camp, Ballyduff, Arklow where you can avail of lessons for children from age 3 ([www.happydays.ie](http://www.happydays.ie) )
- Try a spot of fishing all over the county including Aughrim, Greystones, Bray or Blessington lakes for the winter months ([www.anirishanglersworld.com](http://www.anirishanglersworld.com) or [www.fishwicklow.ie](http://www.fishwicklow.ie)) Annamoe Trout Farm is a good option for children as it contains a junior bait fishing pond ([www.annamoetroutfishery.com](http://www.annamoetroutfishery.com) )

## Where to Stay



*Please mention Mykidstime when Booking*

**The Esplanade Hotel, Bray**  
<http://www.esplanadehotel.ie/>

On the seafront, at the foot of Bray Head, the family friendly Esplanade Hotel faces the promenade. It has spacious rooms including large family rooms, free Wi-Fi and free parking.

**The Ramada Hotel, Bray**  
<http://www.ramadabray.com/>

With spacious rooms and free WiFi, Ramada Bray, a family friendly hotel, is about one kilometre from Bray's seafront promenade & beach.

**Druids Glen Hotel,  
Newtownmountkennedy**  
[www.druidsglenresort.com](http://www.druidsglenresort.com)

Interconnecting & Spacious Family Rooms, Kids Under 12 Eat Free with Specially Designed Kid's Menu. 24 Hour Family Room Service, Complimentary DVD Players for Rooms On Request, with a selection of Family Movies. Self-catering homes also available on the grounds through Trident Holiday homes (01 2018440)

**The Glenview Hotel, Delgany**  
<http://www.glenview.com/>

Just off the N11, The Glenview has a selection of spacious family bedrooms catering for up to 4 children and also a number of interconnecting family rooms to cater for up to 6 children. They run a kids club with activities for children during mid-term and summer breaks.

**The Grand Hotel, Wicklow Town**  
<http://www.grandhotel.ie/>

Has family rooms sleeping a max of 4 people excluding a cot and offers some good value breaks.

**The Arklow Bay Hotel**  
<http://www.arklowbay.com/>

Organised activities during holidays includes kids clubs, evening DVD's etc. Often has good offers for 2 adults and 2 children staying free



**Hidden Valley Camping and Caravan Park, Rathdrum**

<http://www.irelandholidaypark.com/>

4 star facilities just 15 minutes from Glendalough with childrens playground, kayaking and swimming included in their many facilities

**River Valley Caravan Park, Redcross**

<http://www.rivervalleypark.ie/>

River Valley is a multi-award winning family run park in the Garden of Ireland surrounded by green hills in the quaint village of Redcross.

**Avon Ri, Blessington**

[www.avonri.com](http://www.avonri.com)

Avon Rí resorts combines luxury self-catering accommodation, an excellent restaurant and café bar with structured outdoor activities, leisure facilities and a breath-taking lakeshore setting in the Wicklow countryside.

**Leabeg House Holiday Cottages, Newcastle**

[www.leabeghouse.com](http://www.leabeghouse.com)

Leabeg House has a charming period Courtyard which has been tastefully converted into several cottages. Also, cots and high chairs to facilitate little guests. Tennis room, BBQ and laundry facilities on site

**Ashford Self Catering**

[www.ashfordselfcatering.com](http://www.ashfordselfcatering.com)

3 and 4 bedroom modern self-catering homes 5 minute walk from Ashford Town on Rossana Farm.

**Abhainn Ri, Hollywood**

<http://www.abhainn-ri.com/>

Luxury self-catering offering superb quality accommodation and lots of wonderful special features and activities on site such as farm walks, play barn, farm animals, Irish home cooked foods and a welcome pack on arrival. Children are included in feeding the animals, changing their water & collecting eggs.

**Moneylands Farm Arklow**

[www.moneylandsfarm.com](http://www.moneylandsfarm.com)

4 star self-catering luxury apartments and B&B with on-site pool, table tennis, gym, tennis court and golf simulator. Spanish camp runs during July and August and for additional fee, guests can join in (ages 4-12).

## Where to Eat



- Numerous fast food outlets including Eddie Rockets & McDonalds in Bray
- Pizza's 'n' Creams in Bray is near Sealife and family friendly
- Mermaid Theatre in Bray has a nice café with a small play area and toilets with baby changing facilities in adjoining HSE offices
- Kilquade garden centre has the copper kettle which has nice indoor and outdoor seating and playground, mentioned below.
- The Lounge at the Powercourt Arms country house hotel in Enniskerry offers kids menus and great free parking.
- The Weir, Ashford House
- Druids Glen Resort, Newtownmountkennedy. Don't forget to ask reception for colouring books and pencils.
- Pub grub at the Beach house or the Burnaby, both in Greystones and both with pleasant outdoor seating areas. Behind the Burnaby (turn at AIB Bank), avail of paid parking and get refunded at the bar.
- Award winning food available in Bates Restaurant in Market Square, Rathdrum or for family friendly pub grub with free cordials for the kids try Jacobs Well on the main street.

## Playgrounds



- Arklow – several.
- Aughrim – beside lake and park in the village
- Blessington



- Bray – several including a modern one off the Sidmonton Road, close to the Esplanade Hotel.
- Greystones – beside south beach and Charlesland
- Kilquade @ garden centre
- Newcastle beside community centre
- Rathdrum beside Parnell Park.
- Wicklow town

## Other Suggestions

- Visit one of the Saturday markets such as the community centre Newcastle @ 10.30am or Stratford Lodge School, Church Lane Baltinglass at 10am.
- Public swimming pools can be found at Shoreline (Bray & Greystones) Coral Leisure Centre (Wicklow Town & Arklow).
- On a rainy day, have a **road trip**. Drive the Glenmalure drive starting south of Laragh or visit some of the picturesque small towns of Aughrim, Tinahely and Shillelagh. Visit one of the highest villages in Ireland, Roundwood.

Visit [www.mykidstime.ie](http://www.mykidstime.ie) for lots more suggestions for things to do while you are in Wicklow

## Shopping



- Bridgewater shopping centre Arklow (often has organised events for children at weekends and during holidays)
- Smyths are in Bray, Toymaster in Wicklow town
- Bray and Wicklow are both busy shopping towns with a variety of shops and services.
- Avoca Handweavers in Kilmacanogue off the N11 for toys and clothing and a yummy café
- Rathwood in Tullow for ladies fashions and shoes.
- For essentials, Dunnes, Tesco, Supervalu and Superquinn all have stores in the county including Blessington, Bray, Greystones, Newtownmountkennedy, Kilcoole and Wicklow town. Centra can be found in Rathdrum and other towns.





## Other Useful Information

**Where can we park?** Many towns operate paid parking. Be careful where you park and be sure to read the signs as tickets/clamps can be issued fairly quickly to offenders.

Arklow has the multi-storey car park in the Bridgewater centre and there are some free spaces such as the Greystones park and ride car park beside south beach and close to the playground. Wicklow town has paid parking at Supervalu. Bray seafront is considerably cheaper to park at than the main street and has a few no fee spaces too. Towns such as Rathdrum & Blessington have free street parking, at present, but plenty of spaces off street at Dunnes (Blessington) or Parnell Memorial Park (Rathdrum).

**Where can we change baby?** These can be hard to find and you may have to use restaurant or café facilities to find changing facilities. The civic offices in Bray have facilities and Supervalu in Greystones. Arklow has Bridgewater Shopping Centre.

### **Where are public toilets located?**

Public toilets can be located in the bigger towns, some requiring a fee.

Aughrim – beside community playground

Arklow – Bridgewater

Bray – Mermaid centre & beside Sea Life

Greystones – beside Playground

Hotels & Cafes in other villages tend to be the most reliable options.