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THE RIVER SUIR



Map Design and Illustration by map...

One Thousand Years of History in a Thousand Paces...

Waterford is Ireland's oldest City and is also older than all of the Northern European capitals with the exception of London and Paris. In 914, the great Viking adventurer and pirate, Regnall, a grandson of Ivor the Boneless, established a base here and built a longphort or ships' haven, which would in time become a modern City.

In 918, Regnall took a fleet of ships and left Waterford sailing for York in England. York (Jorvick) was then controlled by Danish Vikings and was perhaps the most important City in the Viking world. After some fierce fighting, Regnall and his fleet captured York and he became the first Norse ruler of that City and held the title 'King of Waterford and York'. The name Waterford is derived from its Viking name Vedrarfjord which has two possible meanings; 'haven from the windswept sea' or 'fjord of the rams', a place where sheep or rams could be loaded for export.

The City was captured by the Anglo Normans in 1170 and the Vikings were expelled bringing about a dramatic change for the City. Within a few years of being captured, Waterford was escalated to the status of Royal City which owed allegiance to the Anglo Norman King of England, Henry II. Modern day Waterford City still retains six towers and long stretches of town walls from these periods which represents the largest collection of medieval defensive towers and walls in Ireland.

Blue Plaque Trail

Along this walking trail you will encounter a number of Blue Plaques at various locations in the City to commemorate a link between a particular location and a famous person or event which are managed by the Waterford Civic Trust. www.waterfordcivictrust.ie/site

Waterford City

Picture the Experience

Did you know?

2014

Waterford is Ireland's oldest city and will celebrate its 1100th anniversary in 2014.

Top things to See and Do in Waterford

1 House of Waterford Crystal:

Feel the heat of the furnace and marvel at the skills of master craftsmen as you are guided through all areas of the centuries-old tradition of Waterford Crystal making. After your tour, indulge your passion for the world's most famous crystal in the lavish retail store which houses the largest collection of Waterford Crystal found anywhere in the world. This is an absolute must see attraction. Shop and Café on site. See www.waterfordvisitorcentre.com for opening hours and tour times or call +353 (0)51 317000.

2 Bishop's Palace

This beautiful Georgian building records Waterford's history from 1700 to 1970. Designed in 1741 by the Anglo-German architect Richard Cassels, the Bishop's Palace is a fine example of elegant 18th century architecture. Treasures on show include the oldest piece of Waterford Crystal in the world! Open 362 days per year, 7 days per week. www.waterfordtreasures.com

3 Medieval Museum (Choristers' Hall)

Step back in time to the 13th century when you enter this beautiful new museum, which will lead you down the centuries into Waterford's atmospheric medieval undercrofts. On display will be the extremely rare Gold Vestments which were hidden from Cromwell's army. Don't miss the Great Charter Roll which was viewed by Queen Elizabeth II on her visit to Ireland. Open 362 days per year, 7 days per week. www.waterfordtreasures.com

4 Theatre Royal:

The Theatre Royal retains its 19th century charms whilst embracing all the best that modernity has to offer. This historic Victorian theatre hosts the finest national and international touring artists and companies. Steeped in musical and dramatic traditions, the theatre has played no small part in bringing Waterford to the forefront of the Irish arts scene. A packed programme of brilliant events is sure to have something for everyone. Café on site. www.theatreroyal.ie

5 City Hall:

Designed by John Roberts this historic building dates back to 1783 and currently houses the offices of Waterford City Council. In the past, City Hall has welcomed such notable figures as Daniel O'Connell, Charles Stewart Parnell and John Redmond. King Edward VII was also received here in 1904. (Currently not open to visitors)

6 33 The Mall:

Did you know that the Irish Tricolour flag was first flown in Ireland in Waterford city? On March 7th 1848 the Irish patriot Thomas Francis Meagher flew the first Irish Tricolour flag from the window of 33 The Mall, unveiling his vision for peace between Irish Catholics and Protestants. The tricolour was raised above the GPO in 1916 and was adopted and was finally recognised as Ireland's national flag in 1937. www.1848tricolour.com

7 Thomas Francis Meagher Statue:

This monument is dedicated to the memory of the Irish patriot Thomas Francis Meagher, who was born in Waterford and fought in the American Civil War. After the war he became acting governor of Montana.

8 Reginald's Tower:

Step through the door of Ireland's oldest civic building and go back in time to 914 A.D. when Vikings settled in Waterford. The tower is located at the apex of the Waterford's Viking Triangle (the historic quarter of the city) and it houses an exciting Viking

exhibition which will delight adults and children alike. Open 30 March - May daily 10am to 6pm June - September Daily 10.00am to 6.00pm, October Daily 10am to 6pm. www.waterfordtreasures.com

9 Greyfriars:

This 13th century Franciscan Friary takes its name from the colour of habits worn by friars in 13th century Waterford as a sign of their humility. The grave of Waterford's most famous architect, John Roberts, lies beneath the tower arch.

10 Christ Church Cathedral and Cathedral Square:

Ireland's most celebrated 18th century ecclesiastical building was the site of the marriage of Strongbow and Aoife, a marriage which changed the course of Irish history forever. The present Cathedral was designed by John Roberts and completed in 1779. In addition to continuing as a place of Anglican worship, this beautiful building is a popular venue for concerts, recitals and exhibitions. Open (June to September) Mon - Fri 9am to 6pm & Sat 10am to 4pm www.christchurchwaterford.com

11 Kite Design Studios:

Waterford continues to be associated with fine design and master craftsmanship. At Kite Design Studios visitors can experience traditional copperwheel engraving, jewellery designing, fine art printmaking, etching, as well as Irish handmade glass blowing and cutting. Open Mon - Sat 9am to 5pm.

12 Greyfriars Municipal Art Gallery:

Waterford's premier art gallery with eight exhibitions annually. It is also home to the City's Arts Office and the Waterford Film Festival amongst others. Open Tues - Sat 11am to 5pm including lunchtime. Admission free.

13 William Vincent Wallace Plaza:

Commissioned to commemorate the 19th century Waterford-born operatic composer William Vincent Wallace, one of the greatest 19th century composers of English opera. Wallace went on to become a founding member of the New York Philharmonic. His works included Maritana, Lurline and Amber Witch.

14 Crane on Custom House Quay:

A fitting tribute to the maritime industry of Waterford which played a crucial part in the city's history and development. Considerable technical and engineering talents have maintained the original mechanisms of the crane.

15 Franciscan Friary:

Built in 1834 and designed by architect Terence O'Reilly, the Franciscan Friary is an imposing Church in the classical style which dominates the streetscapes of both narrow lanes on which it is sited.

16 St. Olaf's Hall:

Restored by Bishop Thomas Milles in 1734 and named after St. Olaf a Norwegian saint. Its location in the centre of the old Viking City suggests that the Church was originally a Viking foundation. (Limited access)

17 Clock Tower:

One of Waterford's best loved landmarks, the Clock Tower was built in 1861 at a cost of £200. This elaborate Victorian public monument fulfilled two civic functions during the 1860's: keeping the public informed of the time and providing a public water supply, including drinking bowls for horses and dogs.

18 Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity:

Designed by John Roberts, the cathedral was built between 1793 and 1796 and is the oldest Roman Catholic Cathedral in Ireland. Striking architectural features and stunning stained glass windows are evident within the walls of this well loved cathedral. Open daily. www.waterford-cathedral.com

19 John Roberts Square:

Old meets new as you find yourself right in the heart of Waterford's main shopping area. The perfect place for visitors to stop for coffee or indulge in some retail therapy, John Roberts Square is a hive of activity and often features musical acts and street theatre.

20 Blackfriars:

Founded in 1236 when the citizens of Waterford received permission from Henry III to build a friary for the Dominicans, it was later used as a Court of Inquisition and is mentioned as such in the city charter of 1626.

21 Waterford Chamber of Commerce Building:

Originally designed and built by John Roberts in the 1780's as the townhouse of a wealthy merchant, William Morris, it is fitting that the building has remained at the centre of trade and commerce throughout its history. The original stone flooring echoes a reminder of the hundreds of years and the thousands of people who have contributed to developing Ireland's oldest city into the place of business that it is today. www.waterfordchamber.com

22 Garter Lane Arts Centre:

A centre for theatre, music, film, visual art and dance, Garter Lane is located in a Quaker meeting house which was built in 1792. Details of the year-round programme of events online at www.garterlane.ie

23 Tourist Office:

Located in a converted 19th century granary, the tourist office will provide you with all you need for your visit to the area. For details of opening hours call +353 (0)51 875823 or visit www.discoverireland.ie

24 St. Patrick's Church (Catholic), Jenkin's Lane:

This is one of the finest surviving churches of the mid 18th century and is the oldest church in Waterford. Built during a time of extreme persecution, it has continued to minister the sacraments throughout its history.

25 St. Patrick's Church (United Methodist & Presbyterian), Patrick Street:

This historic church was constructed in 1727 on the site of a previous medieval church structure. The building is another fine example of Waterford architecture and is a fitting reminder of a city which has embraced cultural and religious diversity throughout its history. (Limited access)

26 Central Library and Index Gallery:

The Central Library is based in Lady Lane and is of special interest to visitors. Housed in a listed Carnegie Building (originally opened in 1904) it was extensively renovated and extended in 2004. This is an award winning building and was part of the Irish Architecture Foundation's "Lives of Spaces" exhibition in 2008 at the Venice Biennale. With regular exhibitions and events, the library is open Mon - Sat from 10am to 5.30pm (also remains open to 8pm Wed and Fri). www.waterfordcity.ie/library

27 St. Martin's Gate:

A short walk from Central Library will bring you to St. Martin's Gate, one of the entrance points to the old walled city of Waterford. Discovered during excavations in 1983, this 13th century gate and portcullis would have been flanked by towers and helped to protect the city from invasion.

28 St. John's Church:

Located on Parnell Street, this church was designed and constructed in 1845. The structure is a perfect example of Gothic Revival architecture which grew in popularity in the early 19th century. Open daily

29 The People's Park and Children's Playground:

Centrally located, the park includes a cafe and a playground for children. Laid out in 1857, the park has received extensive renovation over the past number of years. On either side of the bandstand are placed two canons which were captured by the British Army in 1854 during the Crimean War.

30 The Court House:

A small bridge links the park to the grounds of Waterford's Court House. This imposing 1849 structure was designed by Waterford architect Terence O'Reilly and continues to serve as a working court house to this day.

31 St. John's Priory:

Part of Waterford's history since the 12th century, it began as a Benedictine priory and flourished until 1537 when it was dissolved by Henry VIII. The land was given to the Wyse family and was their place of burial for centuries. Following recent restoration of the priory walls, some of the original structure and burial site are visible to the public.

32 Priory of St. Saviour:

Designed by George Goldie and built between 1872-1880, the Priory embraced the Italianate renaissance revival style which is carried through the interior.

Waterford Towers:

A striking reminder of Waterford's rich history can be seen in the remaining historic walls and towers. The inside of the towers are rarely accessible, but are worthy inclusions on any walking tour of the city. The towers were vital structures in defending the city walls.

- 33 Watch Tower
- 34 Double Tower
- 35 French Tower
- 36 Semi Lunar Tower
- 37 Beach Tower

Edmund Rice Heritage Centre:

Located on Barrack Street, this interactive heritage centre tells the story of Edmund Rice and his incredible legacy. The centre comprises a new chapel, a meditation garden and a completely refurbished museum and heritage centre. It is located on the site where Edmund Rice founded his first community of Brothers and established his first school for the education of the poor. Open Mon - Fri 9am to 5pm and Sat 10am - 2pm. www.edmundrice.ie

Waterford Nature Park:

This recently opened fifty acre nature park is the perfect place for all the family to enjoy walking, jogging, cycling, or simply taking some time out to relax and commune with Mother Nature. Free Admission. Situated just 2km from the City Centre, for opening hours visit www.waterfordnaturepark.ie

