

Valleys, Views and Vales.



carlow
wander off the track

NINE STONES, COUNTY CARLOW



The Nine Stones Viewing Point provides an unrivalled vista of the rich and colourful Carlow countryside spread out like a tapestry before you. Eight counties can be viewed from this spot – Carlow, Laois, Kildare, Wicklow, Wexford, Waterford, Kilkenny and the mountains of Tipperary, and on a clear day the coast of Wales, to the east. On the lower side of the road, you will see an alignment of nine small stones in the ground. Mystery surrounds the origin of the stones that give this location its name. One legend says they commemorate nine shepherds lost on Mount Leinster in a long-forgotten storm. Others describe them as memorials to dead chieftains or even 1798 rebels.

The area contains extensive tracts of forest, owned by Coillte, Ireland's commercial forestry company featuring mainly spruce, larch and fir.

Mount Leinster is the highest point of the granite-cored Blackstairs Mountains which reaches a height of 795 metres. This elevation made it a natural location for transmitters which have continually broadcast to southern counties since 1961. Its ancient name, 'Suidhe Laighean', proclaims that the mountain probably served an equally important role in the distant past. Translated, this means 'the meeting place of the men of Leinster', a choice which is understandable considering the location's dominance of the landscape.

The Blackstairs have been designated as a Special Area of Conservation to safeguard their valuable wet and dry heaths. The mountains' environmental status is further enhanced by their moorlands. These are the only such examples located above 300 metres anywhere in Carlow and Wexford. Higher still, heather, bilberry and crowberry flourish while gorse and bracken blanket the lower areas. Among the birdlife that thrive in this habitat are red grouse, birds of prey including kestrels, peregrine falcons (which hunt yellowhammers) plus skylarks, pheasants and woodcocks.

Thursday 17th SEPTEMBER 2026 - CONT.

11:00 AM	Departure - Nine Stones for St. Mullins
11:30 AM	Arrival - St. Mullins for Welcome and Guided Tour

ST. MULLINS, CO. CARLOW, R95 XY93



St. Mullins is a charming riverside village nestled on the banks of the River Barrow renowned for its impressive ecclesiastical history. It stands as one of the country's most significant archaeological sites, comparable in importance with Glendalough and Clonmacnoise.

The village derives its name from St. Moling (614 – 696 A.D.) and boasts physical remnants from many pivotal periods in Irish history. These include an early Christian monastic settlement, a Norman Motte and Bailey, a large graveyard with many insurgents from the 1798 Rebellion, 19th century flour and woollen mills and the river with its history in both fishing and canal boat transportation.

According to tradition, the history of St. Mullins stretches back even further, with connections to Fionn Mac Cumhail. It is said that Fionn stopped here to consolidate his followers on his way north to battle.



Thursday 17th SEPTEMBER 2026 - CONT.

1:00 PM

Lunch - The Mullichain Café, quayside St Mullins



THE MULLICHAIN CAFÉ, THE QUAY, ST. MULLINS, CARLOW, R95 XY93

The Mullichain Café and Restaurant is part of the tastefully restored old grain store buildings that were used by the Grand Canal Company and then Odlums, the millers. Enjoy lunch followed by dessert and a selection of teas or coffees. The Café is on two floors of the beautifully restored Old Grain store building and has extensive picnic tables along the side of the river wall, making it a wonderful spot to enjoy a two-course lunch followed by tea/coffee. Visitors can also take a walk to the first lock and see where the building of the canal system originated from, as St Mullins was the first lock to be completed in the 1780s Y

Thursday 17th SEPTEMBER 2026 - CONT.

2:30 PM	Departure - St. Mullins to Borris
3:00 PM	Arrival - Borris: Visit to O'Shea's Traditional Irish Pub or Borris Viaduct
4:00 PM	Departure - Borris for Carlow Town and individual hotels



O'SHEA'S PUB, MAIN STREET, BORRIS, CO. CARLOW, R95 C92R

This charming rural pub has been owned by the O'Shea family for many generations, serving a great pint of stout, a wide variety of craft beers and whiskey or tea and coffees if that's your tippie! An ideal spot for a relaxing drink with a lovely range of old photos and memorabilia. This traditional style pub hasn't changed much in 100 years. A Victorian Parlour/lounge area is a particular feature of the pub as is the maze of tightly packed, brightly painted shelving and the hardware hanging from the ceiling. Visitors can also enjoy the charm of the surrounding Georgian village of Borris on your visit.

Return to Carlow Town via Bagenalstown , Leighlinbridge and Milford for 5 p.m.