

# TIME TO ENJOY...

# HIDDEN GEMS

Step off the beaten path and explore the magic of Tipperary's past, where every stone tells a story. These hidden gems include ancient abbeys, castle ruins, forgotten high crosses. There are also elegant historic homes, some passed down through generations, where legendary hospitality awaits. All bringing Ireland's past to life.

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## Ahenny High Crosses

Ahenny  
Open year round

The Ahenny High Crosses are among Ireland's oldest and most intricate examples of early Christian stonework, dating back to the 8th century. Standing over 3 meters tall, these sandstone crosses are adorned with detailed carvings of biblical scenes and Celtic designs. Located in the tranquil Kilclispeen Graveyard, they offer a glimpse into the rich monastic history of the region.

[www.heritageireland.ie/unguided-sites/ahenny-high-crosses/](http://www.heritageireland.ie/unguided-sites/ahenny-high-crosses/)

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## Athassel Abbey

Golden  
Open year round

Athassel Abbey, established in the 12th century, is the largest medieval priory in Ireland. Once a bustling urban center with over 2,000 inhabitants, the abbey now stands in serene ruins along the River Suir. Visitors can explore the remnants of the cloisters, intricately carved stones, and enjoy panoramic views of the Galtee Mountains.

[www.discoverireland.ie/tipperary/athassel-abbey](http://www.discoverireland.ie/tipperary/athassel-abbey)

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## Augustinian Abbey, Fethard

Fethard, E91 NR53  
Open year round

Founded in 1305 as a friary, the present church is the original 14th-century building which was modified in the 15th Century. The front facade of the existing church dates to circa 1835 when the original medieval tower was demolished. Located inside is a stained-glass window by the famed Harry Clarke Studio. Outside, visitors can walk around the small attached graveyard which contains gravestones dating back to the 1600s and view the Sheela na Gig.

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

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## Burncourt Castle

Burncourt  
Open year round

Burncourt Castle is situated near Burncourt off the M8 five miles south west of Cahir. The ruined castle, really a 17th Century fortified house, comprises a rectangular central block with a four storey square tower at each corner. Visitors can observe the corbels over the entrance and floral motifs on the doorway hood, reflecting the architectural style of the period.



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## Dominican Abbey Lorrha

Lorrha  
Open year round

Established in 1269 by Walter de Burgo, the Dominican Abbey in Lorrha encompasses the remains of three churches, two high crosses, and a moat. Architectural highlights include lancet windows and fragments of a five-light window. The site also features notable tombs of the MacEgans, Brehons, Lawyers, and O'Kennedys  
[www.visitlorrhadorrha.com](http://www.visitlorrhadorrha.com)

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## Famine War House 1848

Ballingarry, E41 XK23  
Open by appointment

The Famine Warhouse 1848 is a museum dedicated to the Young Irelander Rebellion. It was here that rebels, led by William Smith O'Brien, besieged 47 police officers during a pivotal moment in Irish history. The exhibition provides insights into the rebellion, the Great Famine, and the broader European upheavals of the era.  
[www.heritageireland.ie/places-to-visit/famine-warhouse-1848](http://www.heritageireland.ie/places-to-visit/famine-warhouse-1848)

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## Fethard Medieval Town Tours

Fethard  
Open year round

Fethard boasts 90% of its 14th-century town walls intact, the most extensive for a small town in Ireland. Guided walking tours, provided by the Fethard Historical Society, explore the medieval walled town, including Holy Trinity Church and the Augustinian Abbey. Visitors can also view the Sheela na Gig carvings and learn about the town's rich history.  
[www.visitfethard.com](http://www.visitfethard.com)

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## Historic Family Homes

Near Tipperary Town  
Open by appointment

Experience Ireland's past through exclusive tours of historic family homes such as Castlegarde, Grenane House, and Lismacue House. These properties offer unique visitor experiences, including guided tours and dining options ranging from afternoon tea to four-course meals. Each home provides a glimpse into the country's rich heritage and architectural beauty.  
[www.hfhtours.ie](http://www.hfhtours.ie)

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## Hore Abbey

Cashel  
Open year round

Originally a Benedictine monastery, Hore Abbey was taken over by Cistercians in 1272. The site includes a cruciform Gothic church, tower, square cloister, and living quarters. Visitors can explore the remaining structures and enjoy views of the nearby Rock of Cashel.  
[www.cashel.ie](http://www.cashel.ie)

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## Kilcash Castle

Kilcash  
Open year round

Kilcash Castle, once the residence of the Butler family, features a fortified tower dating from the 16th century. An adjoining hall was added later, reflecting a shift from defensive architecture to more comfortable living spaces. The nearby medieval church and Romanesque doorway add to the site's historical significance.  
[www.kilcash.org](http://www.kilcash.org)

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## Kilcooley Abbey

Kilcooley  
Open year round

The Cistercian abbey at Kilcooley was founded in 1182 by monks from Jerpoint after Donal Mor O'Brien granted them land there. The abbey was rebuilt after being destroyed in 1445 and is noted for a fine east window and fascinating medieval tombs.  
[www.discoverireland.ie/tipperary/kilcooley-abbey](http://www.discoverireland.ie/tipperary/kilcooley-abbey)

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## Knockelly Castle

Fethard, E91 ND29  
Open by appointment

Knockelly Castle, surround by an impressive complete bawn wall with gun turrets and bartizans, was built by the Earls of Ormond in 1465 and subsequently became a Jacobean gentleman's residence. Currently undergoing conservation, it is open for workshops and guided tours. Knockelly offers a captivating glimpse into Ireland's social and architectural evolution, brimming with tales of romance and local folklore.

[www.knockellycastle.eco](http://www.knockellycastle.eco)

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## Knockgraffon Motte

Cahir  
Open year round

Built by the Normans in 1192, this impressive motte may stand on an earlier inauguration site for the kings of Munster. Its rectangular bailey stretches northeast, with overgrown castle ruins still visible inside.

[www.heritageireland.ie/unguided-sites/knockgraffon-motte-and-bailey/](http://www.heritageireland.ie/unguided-sites/knockgraffon-motte-and-bailey/)

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## Lackeen Castle

Lorrha  
Open year round

Built in the 12th century and rebuilt in the 16th by John O'Kennedy, this castle and bawn once held the 9th-century Stowe Missal. Nearby stands a Cromwellian farmhouse, and the castle remains remarkably well-preserved and well worth a visit.

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

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## Lár na Páirce

Thurles, E41 C6W8  
Open year round

Lár na Páirce is the first museum dedicated to Gaelic Games. Located in Thurles, the birthplace of the (Gaelic Athletic Association) GAA, it houses Ireland's oldest collection of Gaelic Games heritage. Exhibitions cover hurling, Gaelic football, handball, camogie, hurley making, sports broadcasting, and the Sam Melbourne Collection of GAA memorabilia.

[www.larnapairce.ie](http://www.larnapairce.ie)

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## Lingaun Valley

Kilkieran  
Open year round

From the foothills of Slievenamon, the Lingaun River winds its way through towns and villages along the border of Tipperary and Kilkenny, eventually joining the Suir River just downstream from Ormond Castle in Carrick-on-Suir. Within the surrounding valley lies a wealth of hidden gems, including many ancient and sacred sites, spanning over 5,000 years of Irish history.

[www.lingaunvalley.ie](http://www.lingaunvalley.ie)

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## Monaincha Abbey

Roscrea  
Open year round

Standing on what was once a bog island, this medieval site features Romanesque and Gothic architecture. The abbey was revived in the 12th century when it became an Augustinian monastery.

[www.heritageireland.ie/unguided-sites/monaincha-church/](http://www.heritageireland.ie/unguided-sites/monaincha-church/)

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## Moor Abbey

Galbally  
Open year round

The Franciscan friary called Moor Abbey is east of Galbally village and overlooked by the Galtee mountains. Only the friary church and tower remain today.

[www.visitballyhoura.com/explore/moor-abbey](http://www.visitballyhoura.com/explore/moor-abbey)



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## Old St Mary's Church, Clonmel

Clonmel, E91 EH74  
Open year round

Old St Mary's Church is believed to have been built by William de Burgo in 1204. Notable features include a 27-foot square, 84-foot high octagonal bell tower, crenellated parapets, and ornate 16th-century east and west windows. Today, Old St Mary's continues to serve as a place of worship for the Church of Ireland.

[www.discoverireland.ie/tipperary/old-st-mary-s-church-clonmel](http://www.discoverireland.ie/tipperary/old-st-mary-s-church-clonmel)

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## Redwood Castle

Lorrha, E45 HT38  
Open seasonally

This beautiful 13th-century Irish tower-house was once home to the great family of Brehons, the MacEgans. Restored to its former glory from ruins in the 1970s, the castle is now open to the public during the summer.

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

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## Saint Patrick's Well

Clonmel  
Open year round

It is said that St Patrick and St Declan first met at this tranquil site 1,600 years ago. Situated in a sheltered valley with the sound of water echoing all around, St Patrick's Well, with its ruined church and cross in the centre of the artificial lake, is a beautiful mix of ancient heritage and modern landscaping. It lies just north of Marlfield village, near Clonmel.

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

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## St Ruadhan's Abbey, Lorrha

Lorrha  
Open year round

The village of Lorrha is rich in ecclesiastical history and home to several significant religious sites, including the ruins of St Ruadhan's Abbey, founded in 540. On the eastern side of the village, you'll find two 8th-century High Crosses beside the modern Church of Ireland. This church stands on the site of a 10th-century church, which was itself built on the original foundations of St Ruadhan's early monastic settlement.

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

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## Tipperary Hills

Tipperary town  
Open year round

Explore over 20 acres of hills shaped by nature and history, with accessible trails, picnic areas, a Heritage Trail, and a Norman Motte. The area is ideal for both leisure and learning.

[www.tipperarytown.ie](http://www.tipperarytown.ie)

