

Kilmainham & the Liberties

Neighborhood Top Five

1 Kilmainham Gaol

(p118) Taking a trip through Ireland's troubled history at this foreboding 18th-century prison, which housed many an Irish rebel.

2 Guinness Storehouse

(p112) Sampling a pint of the black stuff at the factory where it all began in 1759 – and continues to this day.

3 Teeling Distillery (p120)

Getting familiar with Irish whiskey at the first distillery to open in Dublin for more than a century.

4 St Patrick's Cathedral

(p115) Visiting Jonathan Swift's tomb in the cathedral where he served as dean for more than 30 years.

5 Irish Museum of Modern Art (p119)

Admiring modern art in exquisite surroundings at a former hospital for wounded soldiers.



For more detail of this area see Map p250 →

Explore Kilmainham & the Liberties

Stretching westward along the Liffey from the city centre, you'll need a little bit of planning to get the most out of these two historic neighbourhoods. Coming from the heart of the city centre, you'll first stumble into the Liberties, on the edge of which is St Patrick's Cathedral and, behind the cathedral, the wonderful Marsh's Library. This largely working-class enclave has been beset by myriad social problems in the last couple of centuries, but in recent years the creeping influence of gentrification has turned its fortunes around, as aspiring young Dubs look to combine authenticity with affordable rents. Right in the heart of it is the new Teeling Distillery, next to one of the best food markets in the city.

The Liberties' western edge is where you'll find the Guinness brewery at St James' Gate, even if the only bit you can visit is the old grain storehouse, now the city's most visited museum. Further west again, just as the Liffey becomes more of a pastoral river in the riverside burg of Kilmainham, you'll come across the country's greatest modern-art museum and Kilmainham Gaol, which has played a key role in the tormented history of a country's slow struggle to gain its freedom. Both are well worth the westward trek (which can be made easier by bus). This is strictly day-trip territory – there's almost nothing in the way of accommodation and just a couple of decent eating options.

Local Life

- **Garden Walks** The Italianate garden at the Irish Museum of Modern Art (p119) is beautiful for a gentle amble, but one of the city's best-kept open secrets are the War Memorial Gardens (p120) in Kilmainham, which run along the Liffey.
- **Markets** The Dublin Food Co-op (p125) in Newmarket is one of the city's best, and an excellent example of socially responsible retailing; it thrives thanks to the dedication of its many customers.
- **Hang-out** The Fumbally (p121) is bringing cafe life to the Liberties.

Getting There & Away

- **Bus** Nos 50, 50A or 56A from Aston Quay and the 55 or 54A serve the cathedrals and the Liberties; for Kilmainham (including Irish Museum of Modern Art) use bus nos 51, 51D, 51X, 69, 78 or 79 from Aston Quay or the Luas to Heuston, from which it's a short walk.
- **On Foot** A 1.5km walk to the Guinness Storehouse from city centre; about 3km to IMMA and Kilmainham Gaol.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

The most convenient way to explore the area is as part of a hop-on, hop-off bus tour, all of which stop at the Guinness Storehouse, Irish Museum of Modern Art and Kilmainham Gaol. When your visit is done you can hop back on and get back to the city centre without hassle.

Best Places to Drink

- Fallon's (p122)
- Old Royal Oak (p122)
- Gravity Bar (p112)

For reviews, see p122 ➡

Best Places to Eat

- 'The Dead' Dinner Experience (p122)
- Fumbally (p121)
- Union8 (p121)

For reviews, see p121 ➡

Best Places to Shop

- Martin Fennelly Antiques (p125)
- Dublin Food Co-op (p125)
- Irish Museum of Modern Art Gift Shop (p125)

For reviews, see p125 ➡