

Kilmainham & the Liberties

Neighbourhood Top Five

- ➊ Taking a trip through Ireland's troubled history at **Kilmainham Gaol** (p111).
- ➋ Exploring the Norman treasures of **Christ Church Cathedral** (p108).
- ➌ Visiting Jonathan Swift's tomb in **St Patrick's Cathedral** (p105).
- ➍ Admiring modern art in exquisite surroundings at the **Irish Museum of Modern Art** (p112).



For more detail of this area see Map p246 ➔

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 are Dublin's two medieval cathedrals, built when the Liberties was a vibrant centre of industry. The area has been beset by myriad social problems in the last couple of centuries, yet it retains the passionate pride of a community that has been knitted together over many centuries, and many Dubliners are increasingly looking nostalgically towards the area as an example of their city 'in the rare auld times'.

Their nostalgia is usually expressed over a few pints, and the western border of the Liberties is where you'll find the source of their favourite nectar, the Guinness brewery at St James's Gate, where an old storehouse has been converted into 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 (p112) is beautiful for a gentle amble, but one of the city's best-kept open secrets is the War Memorial Gardens (p118) in Kilmainham, which runs along the Liffey.
- ➔ **Markets** The Dublin Food Co-op (p119) 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.
- ➔ **Hangout** The Fumbally Cafe (p118) 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 the Irish Museum of Modern Art) use bus nos 23, 51, 51A, 78 or 79 from Aston Quay.

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 get back on and return to the city centre without hassle.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Lock's Brasserie (p118)
- ➔ Fumbally Cafe (p118)

For reviews, see p118 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Fallon's (p118)
- ➔ Old Royal Oak (p119)
- ➔ Gravity Bar (p102)

For reviews, see p118 ➔

Best Places to Amble

- ➔ Irish Museum of Modern Art (p112)
- ➔ War Memorial Gardens (p118)

For reviews, see p112 ➔