



FIVE IRISH GREENWAYS

Nicola Brady takes the off-road track to tranquillity.

CONNEMARA While the popularity of the much-loved Great Western Greenway (greenway.ie) is undeniable, the newly launched Connemara Greenway is nipping at its heels. Though only the first 6km is complete, this initial stretch is a corker, running through the dreamy Connemara landscape. One end of the route is practically at the gates of Ballynahinch Castle (ballynahinch-castle.com), so make the most of it by calling in for a bowl of chowder and a pint by the fireside. When the rest of the greenway is complete, it will span the 76km from Galway to Clifden. connemaragreenway.ie



WATERFORD

Stretching between Waterford City and Dungarvan, this 46km greenway meanders through the picture-perfect countryside of the Southeast. The former railway line is a dream to explore, the wide, off-road track shared peacefully by walkers, cyclists and the odd pup. Whether you tackle it on two wheels or two feet, you'll make your way through gorgeous spots, along the edges of the River Suir, through foreboding brick tunnels and over soaring viaducts (those with a fear of heights have been warned!). visitwaterfordgreenway.com



ROYAL CANAL

In its entirety, the Royal Canal spans all the way from Dublin's River Liffey to Clondara in Co Longford. Due to officially open later this year, the first section of the Royal Canal Greenway will start in Maynooth and finish in Clondara. The towpath follows the route of the canal and passes quaint country villages and peaceful rural tableaus. On your journey you'll discover pretty bridges, vibrant hedgerows and buildings in Abbeyshrule that can be traced back to 1200 AD. royalcanalgreenway.ie

BOYNE

If you want to get into the belly of Ireland's Ancient East, then this is the greenway to go for. Kicking off in Dominic's Park in Drogheda, this route takes you from the banks of the River Boyne, alongside the canal and over nifty boardwalks to Oldbridge, where you'll find the Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre. Though the greenway is a short one (just a whisper under 2km), be sure to allow plenty of time to stop at the heritage signs dotted along the boardwalks - they're filled with information about Boyne Valley's ancient mythology. drogheda.ie





GREAT SOUTHERN Also known as the Limerick Greenway, this 39km route runs from Rathkeale to Abbeyfeale. Although it's one of the lesser-known greenways, it ambles through some gorgeous stopping points, from beautiful cut-stone bridges to Norman castles and Medieval ruins to abbeys. The majority of the route traverses the peaceful landscape of Limerick, where you'll walk under the shade of trees alongside gently rolling fields. In each of the market towns (Rathkeale, Newcastle West and Abbeyfeale) there are shorter looped walks, which complement the main route. southerntrail.net