Dear walker,

Welcome to Glengarriff, The Rugged Glen, a paradise for walkers of all abilities. There are walks for everyone, from easy to hard levels, and both short or long treks. The walks feature some of the most beautiful scenery in Ireland and uniquely show case all of Ireland’s geological features. Included in just one geographical location you will find amazing views to the sea, rivers and lakes or forest, bog and mountain. With Glengarriff as your chosen walking destination, you are bound to be challenged and satisfied after a long day in the hills.

There is ample accommodation in the village to use as a holiday base and there is easy access to walks on both the Sheeps Head peninsula to the south and in the Kerry mountains further north.

Produced by Glengarriff Tourism & Development Association

Designed by Tim Darmody (Old 41792)
Photographs: Markus Baeuchle, Kloe Woods, Kurt Lyndorff

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Walking in Glengarriff

strolls rambles

Rejuvenate

Eccles Hotel

GARINISH ISLAND – 1–2 hours + ferry

Garinish (Ir. Inis Mhara) is Ireland’s most outstanding garden island with its internationally famous collection of plants and world-renowned for its Italian Gardens and rare beauty. Garinish is reached by ferry across the placid waters of the inner bay and visitors are rewarded by views of the mainland, and a host of walks, from strolls in the forest with its rivers and glades of oak, to more ambitious treks up the peaks.

Note: A separate admission charge is payable upon arrival on the island.

Caha Mountains – National Heritage Area

Comprising of over 100 square km of spectacular mountain scenery, the Caha Mountains Heritage Area is one of Europe’s last remaining natural wilderness. Try hiking amongst the peaks (the climbs are not steep), visit the central plateau and catch a wild trout in its many lakes, relax in solitude, unwind and let the scenery take your breath away.

There are numerous hikes in this area but here are the three most popular. All three can be done in a day to complete the Great Glengarriff Horseshoe. A word of caution, as these routes are off-path and through remote high areas, good walking shoes, boots, an OS map, a knowledge of the weather and word of caution, as these routes are off-path and through remote high areas, good walking shoes, boots, an OS map, a knowledge of the weather

Accessed from Barley Lake or Caha Tunnel the route follows stream west of Barley Lake. Take ridge around valley and accessed from Barley Lake or Caha Tunnel the route follows stream west of Barley Lake. Take ridge around valley and along county boundary. Views north to Macgillicuddy’s Reeks and south to Bantry Bay.

Ascending from Barley Lake head south-west along ridge, keeping Coomerkane and Magannagan valleys on left. Spectacular views west of Bere Island and Beara Peninsula. May be combined with Sugarloaf ascent.

Can be climbed by shorter but steeper route from stream at May be combined with Sugarloaf ascent.

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Ascending from Barley Lake head south-west along ridge, keeping Coomerkane and Magannagan valleys on left. Spectacular views west of Bere Island and Beara Peninsula. May be combined with Sugarloaf ascent.

1 North Horseshoe – Distance: 14km Standard: steep

Accessed from Barley Lake or Caha Tunnel the route follows stream west of Barley Lake. Take ridge around valley and along county boundary. Views north to Macgillicuddy’s Reeks and south to Bantry Bay.

2 South Horseshoe – Distance: 11.5km Standard: steep

Accessed from Barley Lake or Caha Tunnel the route follows stream west of Barley Lake. Take ridge around valley and along county boundary. Views north to Macgillicuddy’s Reeks and south to Bantry Bay.

3 Sugarloaf Mountain – Distance: 11.5km Standard: steep

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Blue Pool Park – Poulgorm

Blue Pool Park – Poulgorm is a beautiful public area in the heart of the Village. It is all accessible by foot from a number of points and is an ideal place for exploring and relaxing for all ages. It takes in the two ferry departure points within the village – the pier and The Blue Pool – together with several shore side trails and loop walks.

1 Seal Point – Distance: 0.3km Standard: easy

Of particular note is Seal Point with its magnificent stand of Scots Pine trees – the only native conifers. A regeneration programme within this area has also identified a number of ancient sites and it is hoped to develop these in the future. Seal Point is also a particularly good viewpoint for all of the inner harbour, highlighting the Seal Colony and it is a popular traditional bathing area.

2 Shoreside trail – Distance: 1km Standard: easy

The Park has a newly installed rustic-style children’s playground which is proving immensely popular and well worth a visit.

CAHA MOUNTAINS – National Heritage Area

Seal Point – Distance: 750m  Standard: easy

Shoreside trail – Distance: 1 km  Standard: easy

South Horseshoe – Distance: 11.5km  Standard: steep

Sugarloaf Mountain – Distance: 11.5km  Standard: steep

or

North Horseshoe – Distance: 10km  Standard: steep

monuments tour

is a beautiful public area in

Garinish

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GLENGARRIFF WOODS NATURE RESERVE

Situated just outside the village on the Kenmare Road, the nature reserve is one of the finest oceanic Sesile Oak woods in Ireland and its spectacular setting is second to none. There are trails to suit all abilities that are clearly signposted within the reserve. A detailed map is available.

1. The River Walk – Distance: 1km Standard: easy
   This walk is a pleasant introduction to the Nature Reserve taking you on a gentle stroll through old oak woods and along river banks. The lush growth of ferns, mosses and lichens is typical of oceanic woodland in South-west Ireland.

2. Lady Bantry’s Lookout – Distance: 1km Standard: steep
   This walk is a must on a fine day and the views from the top are well worth the steep climb. From here you can appreciate the full beauty of the Nature Reserve and Woodlands laid out below you and the mighty Cahas Mountains.

3. Big Meadow Walk – Distance: 3km Standard: easy
   This walk takes in an area of old grassland that has not been fertilized or ploughed for as long as anyone can remember. In summer it is full of wild flowers and cattle graze in the winter to protect the grassland from invading scrub.

4. Esknamuckey Trail – Distance: 3km Standard: moderate
   This is one of the longer walks and is also known as the High Walk. As it climbs through the woods it offers spectacular views over the valley and beyond. It can also be combined with the Waterfall Walk (see number 5 below).

5. The Waterfall Walk – Distance: 0.5km Standard: easy
   This easy walk takes in the waterfall in the Canrooska River, which flows down to meet Glengarriff River. It is especially impressive after rain. After you cross the stone bridge over the Canrooska River, there is a good spot for a picnic.

6. Easglan Bridge By Bog Road – Distance: 19km Standard: easy
   Follow signs from starting junction and you will travel in an easterly direction towards Coomhola. The road levels out with some peat bogs and after a 2km you emerge at a crossroads. From here roads lead to The Priests Leap, Bailin Valley, Ballylacky, Pearsons Bridge and Slieve. To rejoin the main road take the road to the right and skirting the Coomhola River you eventually rejoin the main road at Snavce. This is quite a long walk from Glengarriff but can be considerably shortened by using the scheduled bus service to drop-off or pickup point which reduces the distance from 19km to 9.5-14.5km.

7. O’Leary’s Point, Esknamuckey and Creeven – Distance: 13km Standard: steep
   These walks are in an area rarely visited and are worth viewing. From the start point the road veers downwards and off to the right. After 100m another road leads off at right angles – this leads to O’Leary’s Point. Retrace your steps to the road and continue along it keeping to your right. Where the road divides in two, continue straight ahead and the pathway ends at the seafront with the offshore little island of Creeven. Return by the same route.

8. The Glen, Barley Lake, Rougham, Rossnagreena – Distance: 32km Standard: steep
   This series of walks takes in the large Valley to the North West of the Village. Leaving by the Kenmare road you arrive at The Gate Lodge which is the main entrance to Glengarriff Nature Reserve. Continue past the picnic area to a country road leading to the Glen. Follow this to your left through new and mature woodland. Take the second left towards Barley Lake over a stone bridge and follow the tarred road up until approx 0.8km to a steep road on the left. At the small car park at top keep directly ahead and after crossing some turf bogs the lake opens up before you. Leave the lake retrace your steps to the stone bridge by the whitewashed cottage. For Rossnagreena, follow the Glen road from the bridge by the cottage to a steep road to the right. Follow this road climbing steadily, keeping to your right and after 2.5km you will find yourself on the main Kenmare/Glengarriff road. On your left is the big tunnel.

The River Walk – Distance: 1km Standard: easy

Carrigrour and Rossnashunsogue – Distance: 8km Standard: steep

Island

Coomhola Bridge By Bog Road – Distance: 19km Standard: easy

Magannagan Walk – Distance: 4km Standard: easy

Esknamucky Trail – Distance: 3km Standard: moderate

Seal Harbour & Bocarnagh – Distance: 8km Standard: moderate

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Start at the Kenmare road, approx 2.5km from the village. Through the gate you walk on a roughish path ascending steadily around bends to the summit with magnificent views of the harbour area and Garinish Island. Continue downhill and after a steep descent you rejoin the main road at near the Esco Hotel.

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Esknamucky Trail – Distance: 3km Standard: moderate

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THE BEARA WAY – 196 km Standard: easy – steep

If you want to see more of the magical Beara Peninsula, the Beara Way is a great way to experience it. The sign posted walk is 196 kilometres long and starts and ends in Glengarriff. From Glengarriff you can go north towards Kenmare or west towards Castletownbere. The masked circuit includes some spectacular scenery and takes in Glengarriff, Kenmare and Castletownbere. On the western end of Beara lies the village of Eyeries and Allihies – and Ireland’s only cable car – to Dursey Island. Northwards you walk along the N71 until two miles up you see the old coach track across the Esk mountain. The views are fantastic towards Bantry Bay and then on the other side to Kenmare Bay. A detailed guide to the whole Beara Way is for sale.