

Social Guide A visit to Athenry Castle, Athenry, Co Galway.

Introduction

Welcome! Today we are going to explore the castle and grounds. The castle was built by an Anglo-Norman Lord called Meiler de Bermingham in the year 1235 AD.

Here is a picture of the castle.



We must not climb the castle walls in case we fall.

Reception building

As we pass through the castle gates we go into Reception, the small building before the castle itself.



At the reception desk, you will meet our friendly tour guides and view the artwork and information on display.



Here you will learn how to enter the castle and this is where we give you your ticket. You can ask any questions here or ask for a guided tour.

If you get lost from your family or group, here is the place to go to get help.

Toilets

The toilets are found in a small building behind the castle, within the castle grounds.

Banqueting hall and tower

Here is a picture of the Banqueting hall and tower across from the castle.



In medieval times the de Bermingham family held banquets here for their visitors. The towers were used by soldiers to protect the family. You can hear the sound of the river flowing just outside the castle walls. Before you go into the basement of the castle look at the panel outside reception and see what the castle and grounds would have looked like when it was first built.



Basement

Here are pictures of the Basement.



Walking through a wooden door, we are now in the basement; the walls ceiling and floor are built of stone. This room was used to store food and weapons. On a wet day the room can smell damp. Sometimes we have events in the basement.

We must now go up the stairs on the outside of the castle to the Great Hall.

Great Hall.



Here is a picture of the Great Hall.

As we slowly climb the metal stairs outside we pass through an arched doorway into the great hall.

This was the family's living room, a place where the lord lived, held court and planned battles.

Stone cravings can be found on the doorway and on windows.



Garderobe



In the great hall there is a little room (with the light on at the end of the hall) which is a Garderobe, a medieval toilet. As this room is very tiny, only one or two people can enter at a time.

Garrison

We now climb the wooden stair to the garrison where the soldiers lived. There is a tiny stone staircase used by the soldiers to gain access from this level, up to the battlements to defend the castle in battle.



Mural Stairs within the walls of the castle.

Audio- visual room



Here we find a door to our audio-visual room, we have a twentyminute film which shows the history of the castle and the coming of the Normans. This is the same experience as going to the cinema.

As the film comes on, the lights go down so it can get a little dark and the film may be loud at times.

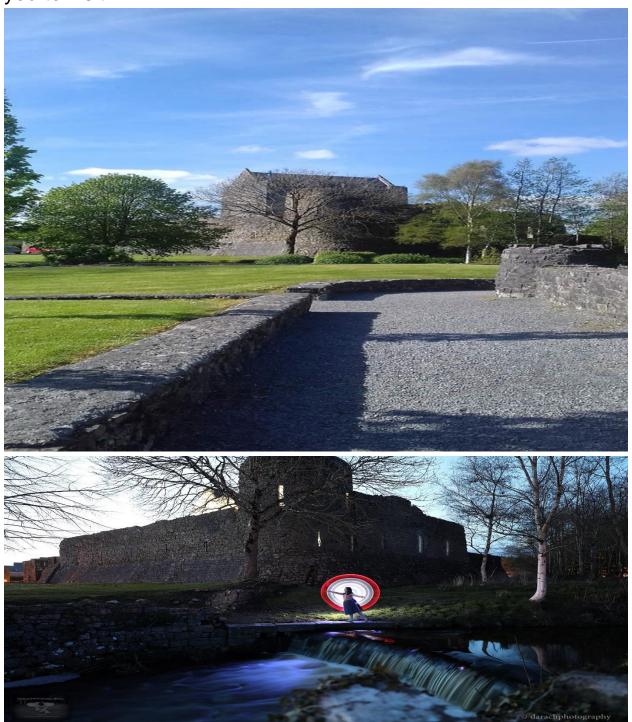
AtticHere are pictures of the Attic.



Now we climb the last wooden stairs to enter the attic. You can smell the restored wooden roof built of large oak timbers. From small windows, you can see views of the castle grounds. Mind your head here as the beams are low.

Leaving the castle

Be careful going down all the stairs to the ground floor. You must hold on to the rails and walk slowly going down each staircase. Exit the castle grounds slowly as the car park and road outside the castle gates can be very busy and noisy. There is a beautiful park with a river outside the castle gates for you to visit.



Events see our Facebook page for upcoming events on site



Medieval combat!

Thank you. I hope you had an interesting visit. Do come back to visit us again soon!