Listen to the story of Portumna
Take an audio walking tour

The English language audio-narrative to accompany this tour can be downloaded from www.galwayeast.com/wayfinding. This audio tour narrated by Dr Peter Harbison describes in detail each of the sites featured in this tour and can be listened to on your PC, or on an MP3 player while walking the tour. There are 5 other Walking Tours in this series: Athenry Ballinasloe, Loughrea, Gort, and Tuam.

See also our **Ecclesiastical Driving Tour** for a comprehensive tour of the main religious sites in Galway East. For more information on any of the places desribed in this brochure, or for general information on Galway East, contact Galway East Tourism www.galwayeast.com

Éist le scéal Phort Omna
Gabh ar shiúlóid fuaime

Is féidir an tráchtaireacht fuaime Béarla don turas seo a íoslódáil ó www.galwayeast.com/wayfinding. Tugann an turas fuaime seo le tráchtaireacht ón Dr. Peter Harbison mionchuntas faoi gach suíomh atá luaite sa turas seo agus is féidir leat éisteacht leis ar do ríomhaire nó ar sheinnteoir MP3 agus an siúlóid á dhéanamh agat. Tá 5 Shiúlóid eile sa tsraith seo: Baile Átha an Rí Béal Átha na Sluaighe, Baile Locha Riach, An Gort, agus Tuaim.

Féach freisin ar ár dTuras Tiomána Eaglasta do thuras cuimsitheach ar phríomhionaid chreidimh in Oirthear na Gaillimhe. Tá breis eolais faoi aon cheann de na háiteanna atá luaite sa bhróisiúr seo, chomh maith le heolas ginearálta faoi Oirthear na Gaillimhe, ar fáil ó Thurasóireacht Oirthear na Gaillimhe ag www.galwayeast.com.

This tour was developed by Galway County Council, with Galway East tourism and funding from Fáilte Ireland.

Other Interests

1. Pallas Castle
Located near Tynagh, a few miles north of Portumna, this is an almost complete, well preserved tower house, which was built around 1500 by the Burkes. It is four stories high, plus an attic and features mullioned windows and fine fireplaces. Also on the site are a two storey gate-house and an 18th century malt-house.

2. Lough Derg / Shannon
Portumna is a crossing point of Ireland's longest river – the Shannon and sits at the head of Lough Derg: 32,000 acres of calm clear water, teeming with fish, surrounded on all sides by beautiful Irish countryside, Lough Derg is aptly named Ireland's Pleasure Lake. Portumna is the perfect venue for a fishing or cruising holiday.

3. Portumna Castle and Gardens
The great semi-fortified house at Portumna was built before 1618 by Richard Burke or de Burgo, 4th Earl of Clanricarde. It was the main seat of the de Burgo family for over 200 years, until it was gutted by fire in 1826. The ground floor of the house is now open to the public.

4. Portumna Forest Park
Portumna Forest Park features forest and lakeside walks and has a car park, toilet facilities and observation points. There is a viewing tower along the nature trail where visitors can get a bird's eye view of the forest, lake and lakeshore. Sixteen species of mammal, including the beautiful Fallow Deer, live in the park.

Nithe Spéisiúla eile

1. Caisleán Pallas
Suite in aice le Tíne, cúpla míle ó thuaidh ó Phort Omna, is teach túir dea-chaomhnaithe é seo a thóg na Búrcaigh timpeall na bliana 1500. Tá sé ceithre stór ar airde, le haileár agus tá fuinneoga muilleanacha agus tinteáin bhreátha ann. Tá teach geata dhá stór agus teach braiche ón 18ú haois ar an láthair chomh maith.

2. Loch Deirgeirt / An tSionainn
Tá Port Omna suite ag ionad trasnaithe na habhann is faide in Éirinn An tSionainn, ag ceann Loch Deirgeirt: 32,000 acra d'uisce suaimhneach glan atá ar maos le héisc, agus talamh tuaithe álainn na hÉireann mórthimpeall air, agus tugtar Loch Siamsaíochta na hÉireann ar Loch Deirgeirt mar is dual dó. Níl aon ionad níos fearr ná Port Omna le haghaidh saoire iascaigh nó bádóireachta.

3. Caisleán agus Gáirdíní Phort Omna
Thóg Risteard de Búrca nó de Burgo, 4ú Iarla Chlann Riocaird, teach mór leathdhaingnithe Phort Omna roimh an mbliain 1618. Ba é seo príomhionad chlann de Burgo ar feadh níos mó ná 200 bliain, go dtí gur scriosadh é i ndóiteáin sa bhliain 1826. Tá urlár íochtarach an tí ar oscailt don phobal faoi láthair.

4. Páirc Choille Phort Omna
Tá siúlóidí coille agus cois locha i bPáirc Choille Phort Omna agus tá carrchlós, saoráidí leithris agus ionaid faire ann. Tá túr faire ar an rian dúlra mar ar féidir le cuairteoirí radharc an éin a fháil ar an choill, an loch agus bruach an locha. Tá sé speiceas déag mamach, agus an Fia Buí ina measc, ina gcónaí sa pháirc.

Portumna
Architectural Walking Tour

Port Omna
Turas Siúlóide Ailtireachta

Introduction

Portumna, whose name in Irish, Port Omna, means 'the landing place of the oak', owes its existence to its location near the Shannon where it flows into Lough Derg, the river's largest lake. The town lies a mile to the west of the river on a site designed to be near an imposing castle with a commanding view of the lake's great expanse of water.

It was Richard de Burgo, one of the leaders of the conquering families originating from Normandy, who built the first castle near the river around the year 1226.

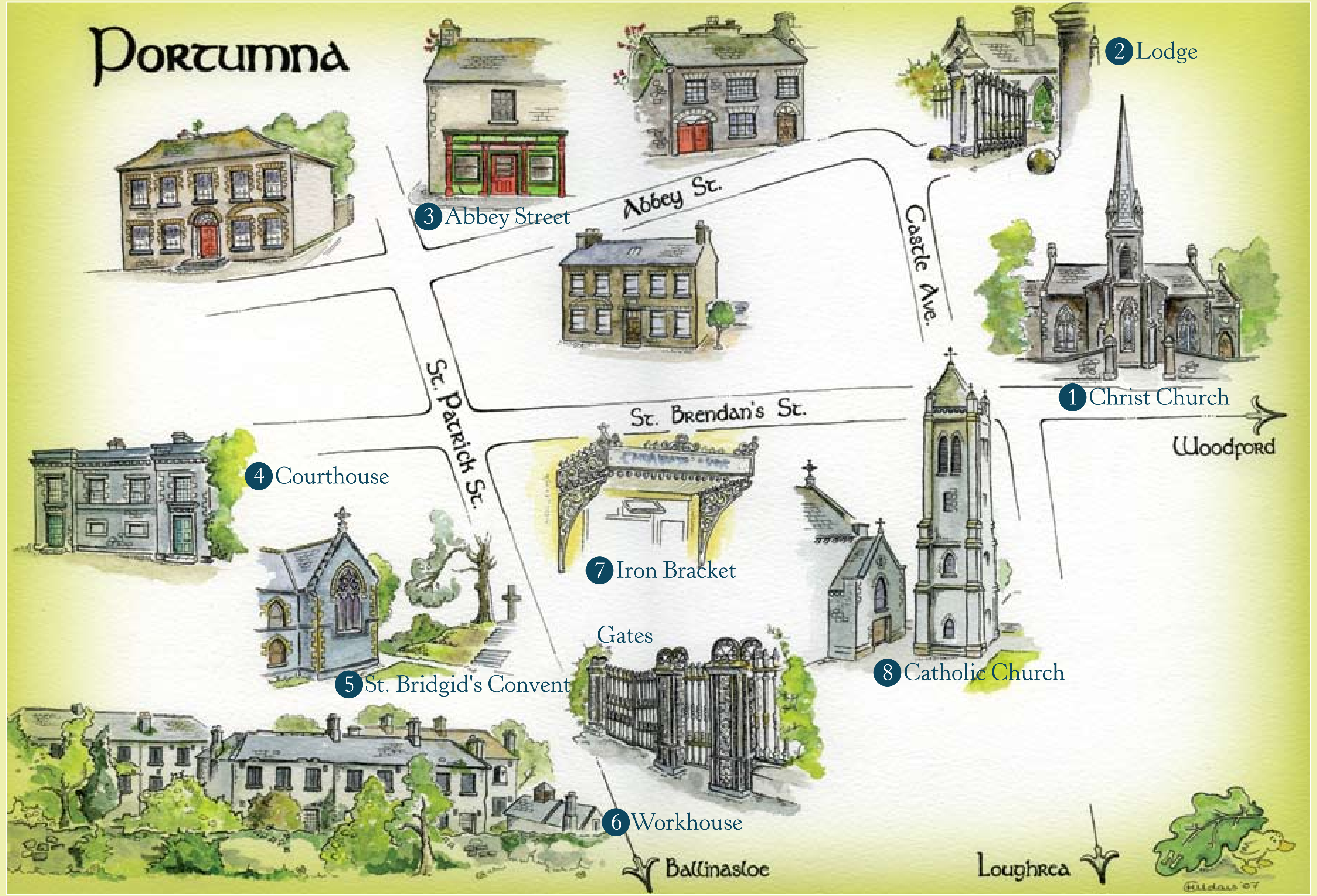
The oldest structure in Portumna is the Priory, which started its life around the 13th century as a small foundation of the Cistercians. It and the adjoining Jacobean castle begun around 1610 are Portumna's two most important historic sites.

Réamhrá

Ciallaíonn an t-ainm Port Omna 'Port na nDarach', agus tá sé suite mar a ritheann an tSionnain isteach i Loch Deirgeirt, an loch is mó ar an abhainn. Tá an baile míle siar ón abhainn ar láthair a bhí roghnaithe mar go raibh sé in aice le caisleán maorga mar a bhfuil radharc ceannasach ar fhairsinge an locha.

Ba é Richard de Burgo, duine de cheannairí na gclann concais a tháinig ón Normainn ó thús, a thóg an chéad chaisleán cois abhann timpeall na bliana 1226.

Is í an Phrióireacht an struchtúr is sine i bPort Omna agus tháinig ann dó ar dtús mar ionad beag de chuid na Sistéirseach sa 13ú haois. Is í sin agus an caisleán Seacaibíteach atá lena thaobh a tosaíodh timpeall 1610 an dá láthair stairiúil is tábhachtaí i bPort Omna.



1 Start your tour at the entrance to Portumna where the two main churches stand opposite one another. First visit Christ Church (c.1832); the smaller of the two, but a superb Neo-Gothic landmark with its spire and graceful proportions. Admire its delicate criss-cross window tracery executed in cast iron, a short-lived technique dating from the early 1800's. The architect remains unknown, but it has a similar appearance to other churches of the 1830's designed by Decimus Burton.

2 Continue down Castle Avenue and stop at the Lodge and gates nearby. The first set of gates are the entrance to the main grounds; continue through and you will arrive at the main "Adams Gates". With their stone piers and original cast iron gates, they form the grand entrance to the Castle grounds. Through these gates is the Castle, the home of the Earls of Clanricarde from early in the 1600's. You can visit the castle now, or at the end of the tour when you return to this part of town.

3 Returning to Abbey Street, we have as good an example of an 18th-century 'Georgian' street as you could wish to find. It is a gem of classical stone frontages and survives well. The street reflects the prosperity enjoyed by the middle-classes in Portumna at the end of the 18th century. A feature worth looking for are the 'slop and jostle' stones. These are located at the base of the arches and their purpose was to protect the arches from damage by the horse drawn cart.

At the corner with St Patrick's Street you can appreciate authentic original features, such as columns, stone doorcases and beautifully crafted doors with glazed fanlights over.

4 Turn left into St Patrick's Street and move into Portumna's busiest thoroughfare, St Brendan's Street. Here, modern shops mingle with older surviving frontages. Turn right along St Brendan's Street, reaching the Courthouse (1847) on the left. A stone-built, squared-up, official-looking building in the Classical style, its façade rises along its four bays to two storeys of elegant design. The upper windows, with sliding sashes, provide top lighting to the timber benches of the main room within. The court-room itself lies behind the 'blind' windows of the ground floor façade. There is an adjoining small prison to the rear.

5 Return back towards the town centre. Turn right and along St Brigid's Road you will see the impressive set of iron gates that front the graveyard. This forms the setting for the site of the town's first Catholic church, a Neo-Gothic design of 1826. Opposite is a grassy mound, believed to have been the first Norman earthwork or "motte". Within these grounds are the buildings of 'The Nunnery' - or 'College Green', which ended its religious function in 1996.

6 Continue along this road for a further half a mile and you will arrive at the post-famine Workhouse of 1852; this imposing, long-derelict complex is subject to an extensive conservation programme. This grey structure of three storeys with a slate roof is austere and prison-like. It is the most impressive example to survive in East Galway of workhouses created as a result of an 1834 Act of Parliament – the Poor Law. Poor Men, women and children were incarcerated here in separate wards and the system did not change until the 1920s. The complex was designed to hold 600 inmates. By 1851, famine had driven almost 4% of the population into workhouses.

7 Return now to St. Brendan's Street; the commercial centre of Portumna. Turn right onto the street and walk west along this cheerful street of shops and pubs. Many features already noted on Abbey Street can also be seen here. Pause to see the cast-iron bracket that projects over the entrance to a butcher's shop half way along on the right.

8 At the end of the street on the right, the tour concludes where it started at the crossroad that leads out of town. Here, on the site that was occupied for centuries by the market, stands the new Catholic Church of St Brigid. It was officially opened and blessed in 1961. In 1969, the great tower that dominates the site was completed. If you are here on a Friday you will find that a country market still takes place on the remaining old Fair Green.

1 Cuir tús le do thuras ag an mbealach isteach i bPort Omna mar a thugann an dá shéipéal aghaidh ar a chéile. Tabhair cuairt ar dtús ar an gceann is lú díobh, Séipéal Chríost (c.1832), struchtúr deachomhréirithe grástúil Nua-Ghotach. Bain taitneamh as féitheogacht chliathach na bhfuinneog in iarainn theilgthe, ceardaíocht ghearrshaolach ó thús na 1800í. Ní fios cérbh é an t-ailtire, ach tá sé cosúil le séipéil eile ó na 1830í a dhear Decimus Burton.

2 Lean ort síos Ascail an Chaisleáin agus stad ag an Lóiste agus ag na geataí lena chois. Tugann na chéad gheataí isteach tú chuig na príomhthailte; lean ort tríd agus beidh tú ag príomhgheata 'Adam'. Lena gcuaillí cloiche agus a ngeataí iarann teilgthe is bealach isteach galánta iad go tailte an Chaisleáin. Tá an Caisleán laistigh de na geataí seo, teach cónaithe Iarlaí Chlann Riocaird ó bhlianta luatha na 1600í. Tig leat cuairt a thabhairt ar an gcaisleán anois nó ag deireadh an turais nuair a fhilleann tú ar an gcuid seo den bhaile.

3 Tá Sráid na Mainistreach ar shampla de shráid 'Sheoirseach' ón 18ú haois chomh maith is atá le fáil in áit ar bith. Is seoid é d'aghaidheanna clasaiceacha cloiche agus tháinig sé slán go maith. Léiríonn an tsráid an rath a bhí ar na meánaicmí i bPort Omna ag deireadh an 18ú haois. Is fiú faire amach do na clocha 'slop and jostle'. Tá siad suite ag bun na n-áirsí agus bhí siad ann chun na háirsí a chosaint ó dhamáiste ó chairteanna capall.

Is féidir taitneamh a bhaint as gnéithe bunúsacha barántúla ar nós colúin, frámaí cloiche doirse agus doirse gleoite dea-snoite le feanléasanna gloinithe os a gcionn.

4 Cas ar chlé isteach i Sráid Phádraig go dtí an tsráid is gnóthaí i bPort Omna, Sráid Bhreandáin. Tá siopaí nua-aimseartha meascaithe trí na seanaghaidheanna anseo. Ar dheis leat ar Shráid Bhreandáin, go dtí Teach na Cúirte (1847) ar thaobh na láimhe clé. Foirgneamh oifigiúil cearnógach tógtha de chloch sa stíl Chlasaiceach é le aghaidh dhá stór agus ceithre bhá. Cuireann na fuinneoga uachtaracha le saiseanna sleamhna solas uachtair ar fáil do na binsí adhmaid sa phríomhsheomra laistigh. Tá seomra na cúirte laistiar d'fhuinneoga 'dalla' aghaidh an urláir íochtaraigh. Tá príosún beag taobh thiar.

5 Ar ais leat go lár an bhaile. Má théann tú ar dheis ar Bhóthar Bhríde feicfidh tú geataí suntasacha iarainn os comhair na reilige. Is anseo atá láthair an chéad Séipéil Chaitlicigh, dearadh Nua-Ghotach ó 1826. Tá cnocán féarach os a chomhair amach agus creidtear gurb ann a bhí an chéad chrémhóta nó "motte". Tá foirgnimh an Chlochair nó 'Faiche an Choláiste', ar cuireadh deireadh lena fheidhm reiligiúnda sa bhliain 1996, le feiceáil sna tailte seo.

6 Lean ort ar an mbóthar seo ar feadh leathmhíle agus tiocfaidh tú chuig Teach na mBocht a tógadh tar éis an Ghorta i 1852; tá clár fairsing caomhnaithe ar bun don fhoirgneamh seo atá dearóil le fada. Struchtúr gruama liath trí stór atá ann agus é cosúil le príosún. Is é seo an sampla is suntasaí de na tithe a tógadh do na boicht in Oirthear na Gaillimhe mar thoradh ar Dhlí na mBocht – Acht Pairliamainte ón mbliain 1834. Bhí fir, mná agus páistí bochta faoi ghlas anseo i mbardaí ar leith agus níor athraíodh an córas go dtí na 1920í. Dearadh an coimpléasc chun 600 duine a choinneáil. Thiomáin an gorta beagnach 4% den daonra isteach i dtithe na mbocht faoin mbliain 1851.

7 Ar ais leat anois go Sráid Bhreandáin; lárionad tráchtála Phort Omna. Cas ar dheis isteach sa tsráid agus siúl siar an tsráid chroíúil seo atá lán de shiopaí agus de thábhairní. Is féidir go leor gnéithe a tugadh faoi deara ar Shráid na Mainistreach a fheiceáil anseo freisin. Seas tamall chun an brac iarann teilgthe atá os cionn doras an bhúistéara leath bhealaigh síos ar do lámh dheis a fheiceáil.

8 Ag ceann na sráide ar dheis tagann an turas chun deiridh san áit ar thosaigh sé ag an gcrosbhóthar amach as an mbaile. Is anseo, ar láthair ina raibh an t-aonach ar feadh na gcéadta bliain, atá eaglais nua Chaitliceach Naomh Bríde. Osclaíodh agus beannaíodh go hoifigiúil í sa bhliain 1961. Críochnaíodh an túr mór atá os cionn na láithreach i 1969. Más ar an Aoine atá tú anseo feicfidh tú go mbíonn an t-aonach tuaithe anseo go fóill ar a bhfuil fágtha d'Fhaiche an Mhargaidh.