



*Powerscourt House and Gardens  
Photo by Chris Hill, courtesy of Tourism Ireland Imagery*

## Great Drives Dublin

### *Around Dublin - From spas to sand*

**Jump in an *Avis* rental car and explore the sunny south-east coast.**

The coast road south of Dublin is a dream for drivers – a tangle of country lanes and glorious hidden restaurants. If you don't get waylaid for too long, you'll hit Ireland's 'sunshine coast' and the untouched beaches of Rosslare and Curracloe.

#### **Test drive this two-day tour for the best of Dublin**

Pick up your *Avis* hire car from [Dublin airport](#) and head south on the M50 road.

Join the crowds at Ireland's popular **Leopardstown** racecourse, then head on to **Powerscourt** for a little pampering. From here it's downhill all the way to **Kilternan's Ski Club of Ireland** before you wind your way along the coast-hugging N11 to glorious **Carne**. Follow this scenic route to the beaches of **Rosslare** and then enjoy the glorious countryside along the N8/M8 on the way back to the airport.

### *High Points en route*

#### **Leopardstown Racecourse – Fancy a flutter?**

Pack your lucky rabbit's foot – Leopardstown is a Mecca for punters in a country that loves its racing. There's plenty to do here – hit a few balls at their cool floodlit driving range or blow your winnings in one of the many bars and restaurants.

#### **The Lobster Pot, Carne – Pot luck**

It's worth working up an appetite while driving down the N11 to the Lobster Pot at **Carne**, a good 60km south of Dublin. Fill up on the finest (and freshest) Bannow Bay oysters and Wexford mussels at Ciaran Hearne's award-winning restaurant before an evening stroll on pretty Carne Beach.

#### **Rosslare Strand – Follow the sun**

This is a daytrip for sun-worshippers and water-lovers. **Rosslare**, in the far south beyond Wexford down the pretty, meandering R742, is officially Ireland's sunniest town and also has one of its best beaches. Get wet-suited up and ride the waves – the windsurfing here is as good as it gets – or just chill on the seven-mile Blue Flag beach. If your adrenalin's still pumping, hire a sailboat and cruise along the coast or try your hand at canoeing.

#### **Powerscourt Estate – Spoil yourself**

What a great drive this is – back up the coast, through rolling hills to **Powerscourt Estate**, around 20km south of Dublin. The gardens and views of **Powerscourt House** are spectacular, but if you really want to indulge yourself, book into the hotel inside the house, the Ritz Carlton Powerscourt, and enjoy some of the classiest treatments for men and women. Girls could try their age-defying facial, while guys can unwind with a salt and oil scrub.

#### **Ski Club of Ireland, Kilternan – Hit the slopes**

Didn't think you could fit in a skiing holiday this year? You're going to love this. **Kilternan** offers floodlit night skiing on one of Europe's best dry ski slopes, and it's only a short drive from Dublin – so you could après-ski in grand style. Beginners can take a first lesson while old hands can cut a dash on the speedy snowboarding slopes.



## High Points en route - Free time on your hands? Take your pick from the following gems:

### 1/ Rathsallagh House, Dunlavin – Play around

**Rathsallagh House** is one of Ireland's most unusual hotels and a former winner of Irish Country House Hotel of the Year. You can splash out on fresh seafood and game at the restaurant, but the real draw is the golf – an 18-hole championship course surrounds the hotel. Sometimes you just have to spoil yourself!

### 2/ The Meeting of the Waters, Avoca – Wet your whistle

This old-world riverside pub is a perfect place to spend an evening. Work up a thirst walking the paths around the beautiful **Vale of Avoca**, then relax and listen to the cream of local musicians.

### 3/ Belfast – Club capital

It's just a short spin north to Ireland's other capital – **Belfast**, which is quickly gaining a reputation for its nightlife. After parking your car, you might want to start off your evening with a little exercise – on one of the city's many pub walking tours – before enjoying a lively evening.

### 4/ Tipperary – Open road

It's not such a long way to **Tipperary**. Hit the open road west – an amazing drive through wild countryside dotted with roadside pubs – and try your luck fishing in the rivers of **County Shannon**. Learn to tie a fly with local fishermen and then try to catch your dinner!

### 5/ Curracloe House – Seahorses

Go for a lazy drive down the winding road along Ireland's wild eastern coast, then hire one of **Curracloe House Equestrian Centre's** horses to explore miles of great beaches. You can trot through the waves for an hour or two before dinner in nearby **Kilmore Quay**. Don't worry – beginners are welcome!

## Avis Great Drives Route Map: Dublin



## Need to know

### Round trip

295 miles (475 km)  
6 hours 50 minutes approx.

### Best time to come

Fish for salmon from February-October.

### Soundtrack

Super Extra Bonus Party –  
Everything Flows

### Essential item

A good pair of binoculars

### Tips

The Republic uses the Euro, but you'll need British pounds if you visit Belfast. There's racing most Wednesdays and Saturdays at Leopardstown but check the internet first for fixtures.

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