



GUEST INFORMATION

Dear Guest,

Welcome to the West of Ireland and the idyllic village of Cong. Carmel & Frank Lydon established Lydon's Lodge in 1976 and still continues to be a family run business.

From 1976 Lydon's Lodge evolved from being ahead of its time as a victualler / craft butcher shop, to a fishing lodge bed and breakfast renowned by fishermen for its high tea dining experience to the now Lydon's Lodge Hotel.

This family run business located in the historic village of Cong combines a warm welcome with old world charm. We enjoy providing a home from home experience and strive to share the best of the west with you.

We have 11 spacious en suite bedrooms consisting of king, double, twin and single sized rooms all equipped with modern conveniences. This is the perfect place to relax and unwind.

The Restaurant and Bar at Lydon's Lodge

We pride ourselves in sourcing the very best of local season produce. Herbs and freshly cut flowers come from our own garden and meat and fish are sourced locally whenever possible. Residents get to enjoy their freshly caught catch of wild salmon and brown trout. Carmel is renowned for her home-made breads, jams and marmalades.

Cocktails, craft beers and cider, organic wine, Irish whiskey, fine spirits and Guinness can all be enjoyed at the bar.

The Restaurant and Bar at Lydon's Lodge is enjoyed by locals and tourists alike as an excellent place to enjoy fine food and a glass of your favourite tittle!

Lydon's Lodge offer salmon, pike and brown trout fishing on Lough Corrib and Lough Mask. Boats, engines and boatmen can be arranged. Cong is an archaeological and geological paradise.

For the adventurous and energetic, hill walking, trail walking, golf, horse riding, cave exploring, mountain biking, shooting, fishing and full range of water sports activities are all available.

If there is anything we can do to make your stay more comfortable please let a member of our team know.

The Lydon Family look forward to meeting you during your stay at Lydon's Lodge Hotel.

Kind regards,

The Lydon Family.

The History of Cong and the Surrounding Area

History of the Dry Canal

In 1848 an attempt was made to join the two lakes of Lough Corrib and Lough Mask by way of a canal, its main aim was to allow steamer traffic from Galway port through to Lough Mask and onto Lough Carra. Because of the porous nature of the limestone this was to become an engineering disaster. The bed of the canal proved too porous and was unable to retain water. This artificial waterway was elaborately finished with sluice gates, substantial locks of cut stone and arched bridges on the canal still remain to this day across from the gates of Ashford Castle.

History of Cong Abbey

Founded in 623AD by St. Feichin as a monastery, this site was then chosen by Turlough Mor O'Connor, High King of Connacht and of Ireland, as the Royal Augustinian Abbey of Cong which was built in 1120AD for the Canons Regular of the Order of St. Augustine.

The Royal Abbey of Cong is one of the finest examples of early architecture in Ireland. Examples of the wonderful craftsmanship are still very much in evidence today with the Abbey's Gothic windows, Romanesque doors and windows, clustered pillars, arches, standing columns and floral capitals.

Three thousand coenobites resided within its walls and cloisters. The Abbots themselves were excellent scholars in history, poetry, music, sculpture and the illumination of books. They were also skilled craftsmen in metal work, engraving, inlaying and designing in bronze, gold, enamel, woodcarving and harp making. The Royal Abbey is one of Cong's most beautifully striking treasures.

It features some very fine examples of stone carving as well as a cloister. The Abbey, which was endowed and supported by royal families of this era, is considered to be one of the finest examples of early architecture in Ireland, and it was here that Rory O'Connor, last High King of Ireland dies and was buried in 1198, though his remains were later moved to Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly.

The Abbey was suppressed in the reign of Henry VIII of England in 1542. It then fell into ruins but was later restored in 1850's at the direction of Sir Benjamin Lee Guinness, former owner of Ashford Castle.

The Abbey served many purposes including a hiding place for the O'Connor family, a hospital for the sick, shelter for the poor and starving as well as being a place of learning for thousands of scholars.

Ashford Castle

In 1228 Ashford Castle was founded by the Anglo Norman de Burgo family following their defeat of the native O'Connor's of Connaught. The de Burgos would build several such castles throughout the province, but Ashford in Ireland would remain the principal stronghold.

In 1589 after more than three and a half centuries under the de Burgos, Ashford passed into the hands of Sir Richard Bingham, Lord President of Connaught, following a fierce battle against the forces of the de Burgos. A fortified enclave is added within its precincts.

In 1715 the famous Ashford estate is established by the Browne family and a fabulous French style chateau is added to the architectural splendour of the castle. The double headed eagles still visible on the roof represent the coat of arms of the Brownes.

In 1852 Sir Benjamin lee Guinness purchases Ashford and extends the estate to 26,000 acres, building new roads and planting thousands of trees and adding two large Victorian style extensions.

In 1868 Sir Benjamin lee Guinness bequeaths Ashford to his son, Lord Ardilaun, an avid gardener who oversees the development of massive woodlands and rebuilds the entire west wing of the castle.

In 1915 Ashford is retained by the Iveagh trust on behalf of the Guinness family until it is bought by Noel Huggard in 1939. Huggard establishes the castle as a first class hotel renowned for the provision of its country pursuits.

In 1951 the director John Ford comes to the West of Ireland to film what would become a movie classic The Quiet Man. Many of the film stars stayed in Ashford Castle.

In 1970 Ashford Castle is bought by John Mulcahy who oversees its complete restoration and expansion, doubling its size, building the golf course and developing the grounds and gardens.

In 1985 a group of American investors purchase Ashford Castle. During the following 16 years Ashford was voted not only one of the best hotels in Ireland by most discerning guidebooks but also one of the top 50 resort properties in Europe.

In May 2013 Ashford Castle was bought by Red Carnation Hotels and began a major refurbishment to bring the castle back to its former glory.

Moytura Battlefield

Moytura Cong just east of the village of Cong is an unusual complex of puzzling stone circles and cairns and Edward Ljuyd made drawings of some of these stones as early as 1699. The plain bounded on the west and south by Lough Corrib stretches twelve miles eastwards to Cnoch Meadh the fairy hill near Tuam. It is called southern Moytura (The Plain of the Battalions).

According to mythology this area of stone cairns was the site of a great battle, three thousand years ago. The battle took place between the Fir Bolgs and the Tuatha De Danann. The story tells us that the Tuatha De Danann, the people of goddess Danu, arrived in Ireland, demanded half of Ireland from the ruling Fir Bolgs. The Fir Bolgs refused and a fierce battle ensued, lasting four days.

The very ancient chronicler reported the battle commenced on the 11th of June, in the year 3303. To commemorate the event, The Fir Bolg erected the large cairn of stones at Ballymagibbon, two miles from Cong after the first days fighting. Each warrior carried a stone plus the head of a slain enemy and the first monument was built. The cairns covered artificial stone passages leading to a central chamber where the ashes of cremated warriors were deposited. There are five similar monuments that stood in a line across the ancient battlefield for a distance of five miles to the northwest.

Ballymagibbon Cairn

Ballymacgibbon Cairn is a huge, unopened and relatively undisturbed probable passage mound. The limestone cairn is perhaps 45-50 meters in diameter, and is quite high. It is surrounded by a low mound, and kerbstones are visible in several places, one of which has some interesting lines and scratches. There is a large pile of stones on top of the cairn which are a recent addition.

The Burren

The Burren is a land of fertile rock, and Ireland's flagship heritage landscape. From flora to fauna, geology to archaeology, agriculture to community. No matter what it is about the Burren that interests you, there is something here for everybody.

Aran Islands

The beautiful Aran Islands, the Island of Saints and Scholars are important elements of Celtic culture for their geographical formation, historical monuments and their linguistic and cultural heritage. Inis Mor Island (Big Island) , Inis Meain Island (Middle Island) and Inis Oirr (East Island) are situated in a north westerly south easterly direction at the mouth of Galway Bay. A true Irish experience where the locals speak both Irish and English.

If you would like to experience the beautiful scenery and the historical monuments please contact Aer Arann 091-593034 to book a flight or contact Aran Island Ferries on 091-568903 to arrange a ferry transfer.

Quiet Man Guided Walk

To take the Quiet Man Guided Walking tours visit the Quiet Man Cottage Museum, Circular Road in Cong Village.

Guided tours for pre booked groups around Cong Village - visit locations from the film such as the dying mans house, Innisfree, Castletown, the river fight scene, hats in the air scene, Reverend Playfairs house, Pat Cohan's Bar and many more.

After the tour explore the Quiet Man Cottage Museum and take in some of the local history.

The 35 minute tour contains lots of information and stories from the making of the Quiet Man, and is a real trip into the past.

Kylemore Abbey

At Kylemore Abbey and Victorian Walled Garden, there is so much for all the family to enjoy. Visit the restored rooms of the abbey and learn about its history and tales of tragedy and romance. Explore the 6 acre Victorian walled garden with its magnificent restore buildings. Discover woodland walks, lakeshore walks, nature trails and children's play trail throughout the 1000 acre estate. The beautiful gothic church is a short walk form the Abbey, nestled nearby is a mausoleum where Mitchell and Margaret henry are burked side by side. Children will enjoy making a wish at the giants ironing stone.

Lough Mask Scenic Tour / Drive

The Lough Mask scenic drive can be taken by the Finney Road out of Clonbur and heading towards the picturesque Partry Mountains where you can make your way winding through the breath taking scenery of the mountains overlooking Lough Mask. From there you trek along Lough Mask's shoreline through the village of Tourmakeady, follow the road through to the end where you can turn right to Partry and onto Ballinrobe to complete the loop or else there is the option to turn left to head towards the town of Westport and Croagh Patrick.

Cross of Cong

This magnificent piece of 12th century craftsmanship is regarded as one of the finest of its era. It is called the 'Bacall Bui' (yellow crozier) and was commissioned by the King of Connacht, Turlough Mor O'Connor and was made in Roscommon in 1123.

Made of oak and standing 30 inches high with arms extending 19 inches, it is covered with silver and bronze plates washed with gold. Its edges were studded with precious stones and a large crystal in the centre covered the relic enshrined in the cross. The cross is richly decorated with designs of intricate interlacing and the carved heads of animals, even the nail heads used are shaped in the head of an animal, evidence of the Scandinavian influence in Irish art. The Cross is on display in The National Museum, Dublin.

Airports

Ireland West Airport Knock	62km to Cong	094 9368100
Shannon Airport	120km to Cong	061 712000
Kerry Airport	232km to Cong	066 9764644
Cork Airport	245km to Cong	021 4313131
Dublin Airport	247km to Cong	01 8141111

Archery

Ashford Outdoors 094 9546507

Banks

There are two banks located in Ballinrobe town which is 15.7km drive from Cong. The two banks are:

AIB, Main Street, Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo 094 9541041

Bank of Ireland, Main Street, Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo 094 9541015

Beauty Therapists

The Beauty Rooms, The Lodge at Ashford Castle 094 9545400

Bicycle Hire / Tours

Ashford Outdoors 094 9546507

Check In / Check Out

Check In time is 15.00 onwards

Check Out time is 11am

Chemist

Should you require a chemist, the nearest chemist is located in Cong Village next to the Tourist Information Office.

Cong Pharmacy 094 9546119

Other Chemist's

Traceys Pharmacy, Main Street Ballinrobe 094 9541087

Ryders Pharmacy, Main Street, Ballinrobe 094 9541016

Joanne Hynes Pharmacy, Cornmarket, Ballinrobe 094 9542088

Church Services

St. John the Baptist, the Neale Saturday 20.00 (summer) & 18.30(winter)

Church of the Sacred Heart, Cross Sunday 10.00

St. Mary of the Rosary, Cong Sunday 11.30

St. Mary's Church of Ireland, Cong Sunday 10.00

Clay Target Shooting

Ashford Outdoors 094 9546507

Doctors

Should you require a doctor, Dr Michael Regan is the nearest doctor his practice is located on the main Galway to Cong Road, The next right after the Ashford Castle Gates as you approach Cong Village.

Dr Michael Regan, Lynn Medical Centre Cong 094 9546006

Out of hours please contact Westdoc on 1850 365 000 who will provide the details for the on call doctor in Cong.

Hairdryer

Available in all bedrooms

Hairdressing

Haire's Cutz, Main Street, Cong

094 9545625

Horse Riding

Ashford Outdoors

094 9546507

Internet Service

Complimentary Wi Fi is available on the ground floor of the hotel.

Wireless ID Lydons Lodge

No password required – please note best reception is in the lobby area.

Iron & Ironing Board

Both are located in an alcove at the top of the main staircase, please feel free to use in the landing area or in your bedroom. We kindly ask that you return both to storage area after use.

Kayaking

Ashford Outdoors

094 9546507

Lake Cruising

Lough Corrib is the largest lake in the republic of Ireland, measuring 68 square miles and with 365 islands, this lake is one of the cleanest, most unspoilt and scenic in all of Europe. A cruise through this unique waterway is a must while visiting the west of Ireland.

Pat Luskin, Corrib Cruises

087 994 6380

History Cruise at 11.00, boarding at 10.45am from Ashford Castle Pier, Ashford Castle

Island Cruise at 14.45, boarding at 14.30pm from Ashford Castle Pier, Ashford Castle

Please note cruising is weather dependable and the 14.45 cruise is from June – September

Meeting & Private Dining Parties

Lydons Lodge offer a perfect venue for small private meetings to large buffets / dinner parties and private receptions. Please ask to speak to the events coordinator to discuss same.

Porterage

If you require any assistance please contact reception

Privacy

If you would like not to be disturbed, please place the 'do not disturb' sign on the outer doorknob of your bedroom door.

Quiet Man

In 1951 John Ford's greatest movie The Quiet Man starring John Wayne, Maureen O'Hara and Barry Fitzgerald was made. It was set in the beautiful west of Ireland with filming being centred in Cong. Quiet Man Cottage Museum is a novel concept which gives the visitor a total Quiet Man experience as if they were actually on set!! Located by the river at Circular Road, Cong between actual locations used for the filming, the ground floor of the cottage has been designed as an exact replica of White O Mornin Cottage.

Quiet Man Cottage Museum is a must for any quiet man enthusiasts or even those wishing to visit a typical Irish cottage of the 1920s

Quiet Man Cottage Tour

094 9546089

Spa

The Spa at Ashford Castle Hotel, Ashford Castle, Cong

094 9545300

Sports

Archery, Clay Pigeon Shooting, Falconry, Equestrian, Cycling, Golf

Ashford Outdoors

094 9546507

Fishing (contact reception for more information)

Tea & Coffee

Every room is equipped with tea and coffee facilities.

Walking

There are lots of suggested walking routes for you to avail of in the local area, please call to the tourist office located beside the pharmacy to pick up trail maps.