



## THE K CLUB GARDEN WALK

The Kildare countryside provides a backdrop for the garden at The Kildare Hotel & Country Club. Trees have long been a feature of the landscape, the name Kildare being derived from the Gaelic, cill, church and dair, oak. Fine examples of oak, lime and beech are evident throughout the demesne. In the 19th century the Barton family laid out the garden on the banks of the river Liffey, combining a formal garden and a collection of interesting trees with informal riverside plantings. The cultivation of a wide range of plants from many regions of the world has been continued by successive owners, the most recent being a Weeping Beech 43 which was just 4ft. when planted at the front of the Hotel by Dr. Smurfit in April 1992 to commemorate the opening of The Kildare Hotel & Country Club. Also at the front of the Hotel is an Oak Tree 42 planted in 1798 (one of two on the resort), the other is on the avenue.

The garden has also made a contribution to horticulture, Frederick Burford, head gardener in the 1880's, noticed an unusual snowdrop among the hundreds in the garden which became known as the *Straffan Snowdrop* (*Galanthus Straffan*), a white spring flowering bulb, which has been re-introduced and planted in the area, along with a new *Daffodil* (*Narcissus Cill Dara*), which was specially cultivated for The Kildare Hotel & Country Club and registered in September 1992 and planted around the Weeping Beech with the *Straffan Snowdrop*.

The garden walk commences on the Terrace, to the rear of the Lobby. Taken at a leisurely pace it lasts some 30 - 40 minutes. The recommended route on the map is marked by directional signs in the garden. Numbered trees in the guide refer to some of the most interesting trees encountered on the walk.

From the Terrace to the left there are commanding views over the garden and golf course of Lyons Hill and the river Liffey, and ahead beyond the formal garden to the plains of Kildare.

Proceed down the steps. A formal *Panel Garden*, laid out by James Howe in the 1880's, is planted with seasonal flowers. The formal avenue of clipped Yew *Taxus* 1 trees leads to a pool with an attractive fountain which is surrounded by *Blue Spruce Picca* 2 and *Sweet Gum Liquidamber* 3.

To the right in the direction of the Boathouse are fine specimens of *Douglas Fir Pseudotsuga* 4 and *Western Red Cedar Thuja* 5 both native to western North America. Several *Lime Tilia* trees 6 have attained noble proportions, attractive in summer with their green leaves and yellow pendulous flowers, in winter they are recognised by their red twigs. They create an attractive contrast with the nearby *Purple Leaved Beech Fagus* 7. Snowdrops, yellow flowered Daffodils and Bluebells are naturalised beneath their boughs.

Continue to the bank of the river, where *Willows Salix* 8 hang gracefully, and cross over the bridge to the island *Inismór*.

Take the right hand path and sit a while beneath the tall *Scot's Pine Pinus* 9 before continuing on the riverside path.

On the right of the path before the suspension bridge, which was erected in 1849, stands the red fruited *Hawthorn Crataegus* 10 which occurs naturally in Ireland. It is associated with the 'little folk' and people are reluctant to fell a tree lest they incur the wrath of the fairies and bad luck could ensue. On the left, a fine specimen of the Japanese conifer *Hiba Thujopsis* 11; note the distinct white pattern on the undersurface of the leaf. Beneath the shade of this tree is a Dog's Graveyard, with headstones in a carpet of ivy, one of which dates back to 1899.

On the bank of the river are several trees that enjoy the moist situation, *Swamp Cypress Taxodium* 12 from Florida and the *Chinese Dawn Cypress Metasequoia* 13. In 1941, a Chinese botanist discovered this tree, which until then was known only from fossil remains. It was later introduced into gardens in Europe and America.



Continue to the fishing lodge and turn left towards the bridge. Conifers predominate in this area, with several forms of *Lawson Cypress Chamaecyparis* 14, *Japanese Red Cedar Cryptomeria* 15, sombre *Yew Taxus* 16 and *Corsican Pine Pinus* 17.

By the suspension bridge, which dates from 1849, are red leaved *Norway Maple Acer* 18 and spring flowering *Japanese Cherries Prunus* 19.

Following the path on the right stands a specimen of *Maidenhair Tree Ginkgo* 38, a Chinese deciduous conifer. This tree was planted in 1971 by a previous owner Stephan O'Flaherty in memory of a horse named Atherstone Wood which won the Irish 2,000 Guineas, the first Classic winner bred at Straffan House. Where the path turns right there is a large mound of evergreen *Holly Ilex* 20.

Continue along this lower path to the Arboretum. On the corner stands a *Giant Redwood Siquiadendron* 21 which is the largest growing tree in the world. Note the whipcord-like dark green foliage and more particularly the spongy texture of the bark. This has given rise to the local common name of 'Punch Tree'.

Hollies were popular with Victorian gardeners and several are growing in this area - a golden *Variigated Holly* 22 and a specimen of *Hodgins Holly Ilex* 23.

Past the purple-leaved *Plum Prunus* 24 and the *Golden Yew Taxus* 25 stands is a *Holm or Evergreen Oak Quercus* 26 with leaves reminiscent of those on holly. In the direction of the river is a well-shapen specimen of the *Blue Atlas Cedar Cedrus* 27 with its distinctive triangular outline. Further along on the right is a very fine *Weeping Beech Fagus Sylvatica Pendula* 28, planted in 1902 to mark the accession of King Edward VII to the United Kingdom throne. The original plaque for this tree is still on existence.

The *Himalayan Birch Betula* 29 is noted for the very white peeling stem which, when rubbed, leaves a white powder on the hand.

Turn left and beside the entrance to the walled garden is an example of *Magnolia X Soulangiana* 32 a pink spring flowering *Magnolia* which was planted in 1945.

Following the garden wall on the left in the shade of the very large *Deodar Cedar Cedrus* 33 a venerable Himalayan conifer planted in 1856, are several *Japanese Maples Acer* 34 known for the delicate tracery of their foliage and rich autumn colour. Nearby, a North American tree bears yellow flowers in early summer to be succeeded in autumn by small cucumber-like fruit. This has given rise to its common name of *Cucumber Tree Magnolia* 35. The *Tulip Tree Liriodendron* 36 was introduced into Europe from America in the 17th century.

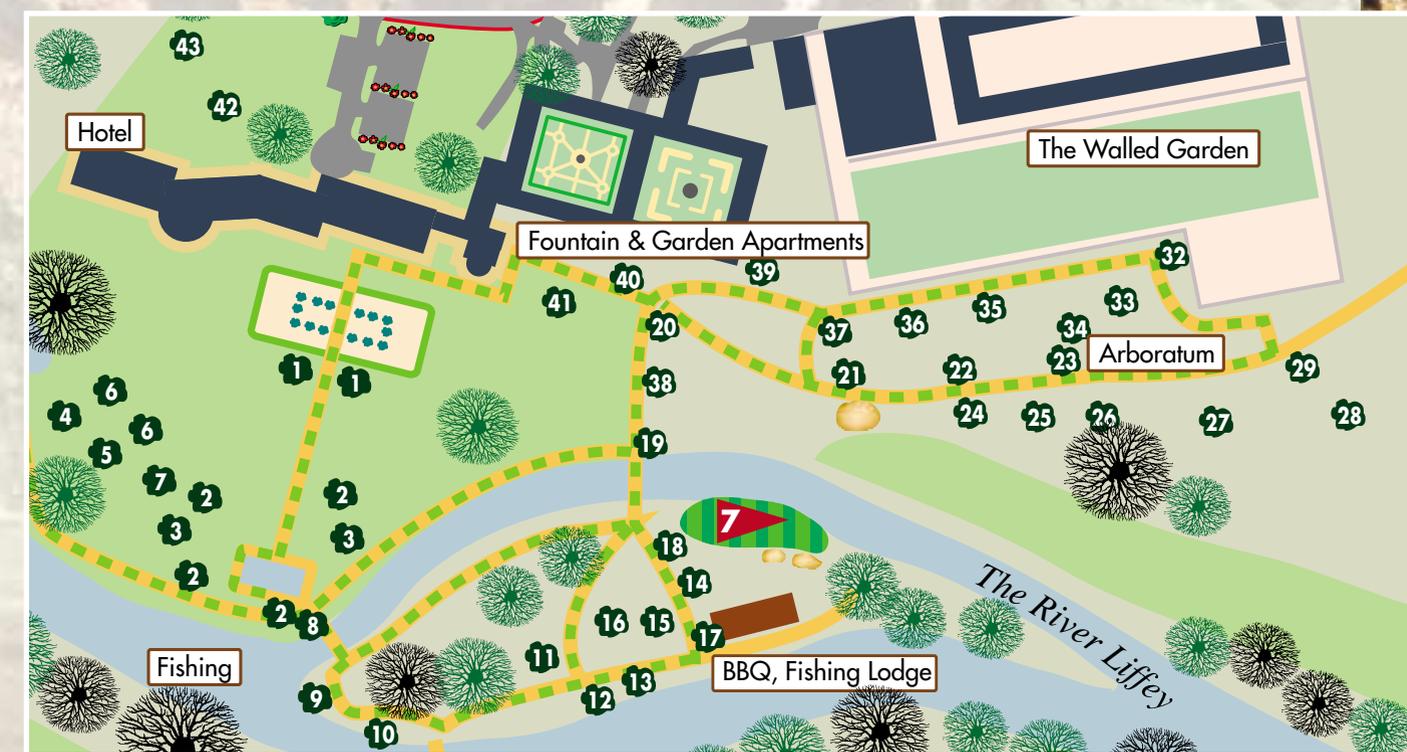
The tall, dark green Irish *Yew or Fastigate Yew Taxus* 37 is a frequent sight in gardens on both sides of the Atlantic.

The original tree was discovered over 200 years ago by

George Willis and is extant at Florencecourt, Co. Fermanagh.

The final trees in the garden walk are native to Europe. The *Cork Oak Quercus* 39 is native to Spain and Portugal where it is the source of cork for wine bottles. A *Spanish Chestnut Castanea* 40 is noted for its husky seed capsules and twisted bark pattern. On the left of the path, a magnificent specimen of *Larch Lrix* 41 stands in a prominent position overlooking the formal garden.

Passing the herb garden beside the pool continue along the Terrace to return to the entrance lobby.





# THE K CLUB RESORT

The K Club, set amongst 700 acres of rolling woodland beside the famous river Liffey, offers the highest standards of comfort, service and cuisine in an atmosphere of gentle tranquillity



The beautiful restored Straffan House is the centrepiece of the resort which offers a magnificent array of sport and leisure facilities all year round.

There are two magnificent 18 hole championship golf courses, the Palmer and the Smurfit. Both are designed by Arnold Palmer but each has its own characteristics and special set of challenges. The K Club will host The Ryder Cup in 2006



To complement our golf courses, we have the K Spa, a luxurious 5 Star spa. The centrepiece is an extensive Pool hall, which includes a 16.5 meter pool, Jacuzzi and relaxation area. There are ten designated suites and rooms in which a wide range of therapies will be provided. The K Spa also feature gymnasium, aerobics area and beauty salon.



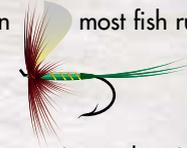
# THE K CLUB FISHING

*The River Liffey* - One mile both banks.

The river Liffey has a natural stock of wild Brown Trout up to 7lb. The river also boasts of great hatches of fly throughout the season resulting in very large bags of fish especially during the mayfly time of May through to July and afterwards on sedges.

Occasionally Salmon are found and the best time to catch one is usually during the autumn when most fish run.

Fishing on the river is by fly only.



Seasons Dates

Salmon	January 1st to September 30th
Brown Trout	March 1st to September 30th

*Lakes*

Two of the lakes on the golf course are stocked with Rainbow Trout and Brown Trout.

The Rainbow Trout average is 2½lb with some up to 12lb. The Brown Trout average is 2lb with some up to 8lb.

Fishing is by fly or spinning only.

Seasons Dates

Brown Trout	March 1st to September 30th
Rainbow Trout	All year round

*Coarse Fishing*

There are three lakes stocked with coarse fish consisting of Carp, Bream, Tench, Rudd, Roach, Perch and also Hybrids with several specimen fish being taken each year.

Fishing All legitimate methods apply

Season All year round



# THE K CLUB



MAP  
&  
GUIDE

